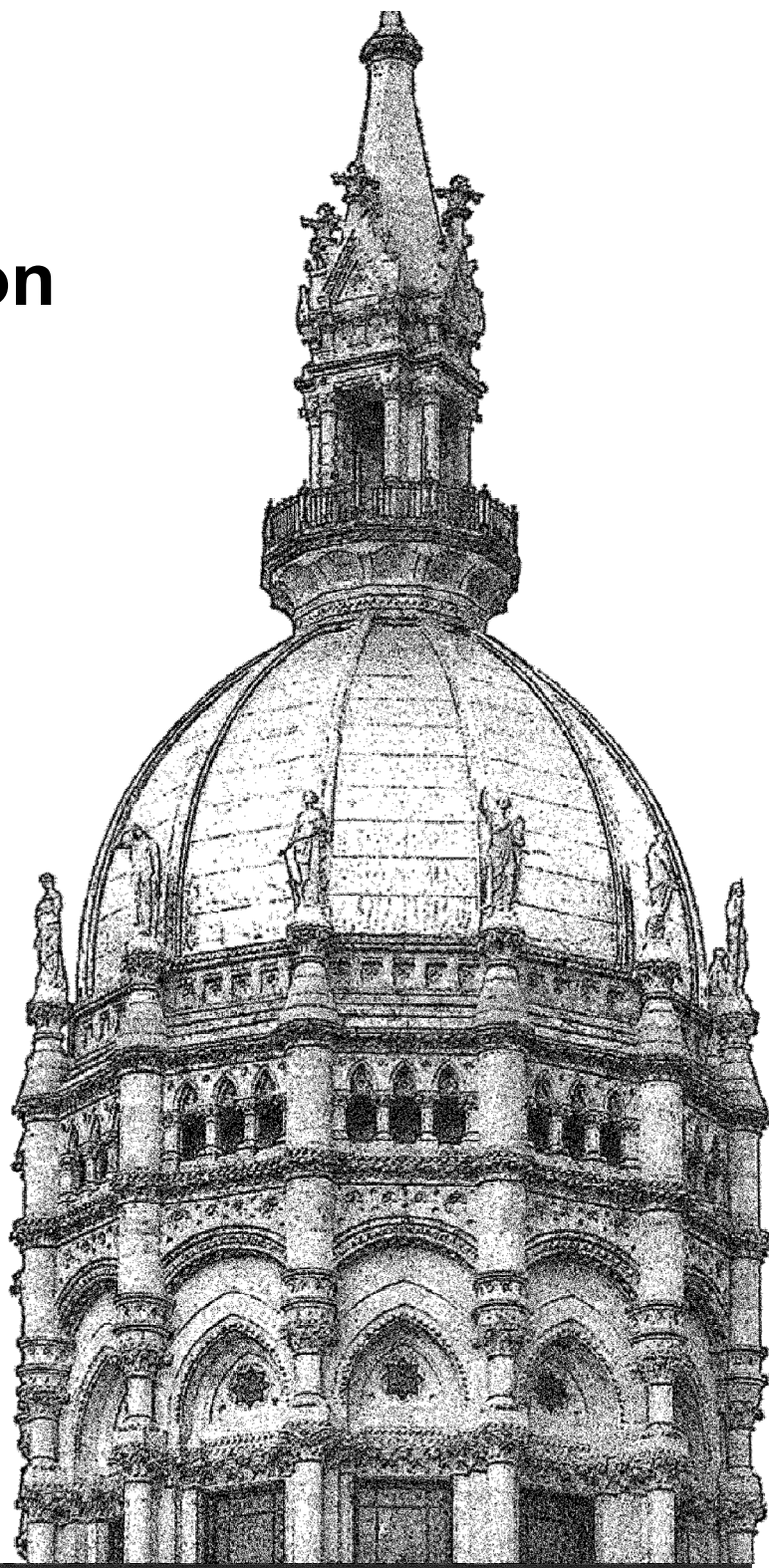


Teacher Certification Program Implementation

DECEMBER 2008



Legislative Program Review and
Investigations Committee

**CONNECTICUT GENERAL ASSEMBLY
LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM REVIEW AND INVESTIGATIONS COMMITTEE**

The Legislative Program Review and Investigations Committee is a joint, bipartisan, statutory committee of the Connecticut General Assembly. It was established in 1972 to evaluate the efficiency, effectiveness, and statutory compliance of selected state agencies and programs, recommending remedies where needed. In 1975, the General Assembly expanded the committee's function to include investigations, and during the 1977 session added responsibility for "sunset" (automatic program termination) performance reviews. The committee was given authority to raise and report bills in 1985.

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LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM REVIEW
& INVESTIGATIONS COMMITTEE

Teacher Certification Program Implementation

DECEMBER 2008

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Table of Contents

TEACHER CERTIFICATION PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	
INTRODUCTION.....	1
Study Focus.....	1
Methodology	1
Report Organization.....	2
Agency Response.....	2
I. TEACHER CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS	3
CERTIFICATION STRUCTURE	
Educator Continuum	4
Endorsements.....	6
Reciprocity.....	8
Special Cases	11
Other Certificates, Permits, and Authorizations	12
Fees	14
CERTIFICATE REQUIREMENTS: EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE	
Initial Educator Certificate	15
Provisional Educator Certificate	23
Professional Educator Certificate	23
CERTIFICATE REQUIREMENTS: ASSESSMENT	
Background	33
Panel Selection.....	34
Setting Standards	35
Monitoring	35
Implementation	37
EFFORTS TO CHANGE CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS	
Current Certification Proposals.....	41
Schedule.....	44
Development Process.....	45
CONNECTICUT TEACHER CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT	
Extent of Achievement Gap in Connecticut	49
State Certification and the Achievement Gap	50
Current State Initiatives to Address the Achievement Gap	51

Table of Contents

Summary	53
II. COMPLIANCE WITH CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS	55
Certification Oversight System.....	55
Level of Compliance.....	58
Findings and Recommendations	66
III. UNIT OPERATIONS	71
EVALUATION OF CERTIFICATION APPLICATIONS	
Application Evaluation Process	73
Types of Application Reviews and Audits for New Certificates	82
Assessment of Application Reviews	87
Reviews of Applications for Continuation of Professional Certificate	87
New Certification System	89
Protecting the Public	91
OVERSIGHT OF CONTINUING EDUCATION UNIT (CEU) PROVIDERS	96
OUTREACH ON CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS	98
MANAGEMENT OVERSIGHT	99
ORGANIZATION AND RESOURCES	
Staffing	100
Revenue	101
Expenditures	101
General Output Measures	102
IV. CUSTOMER SERVICE.....	105
EDUCATORS	
Overall Satisfaction	105
Timeliness	106
Websites.....	110
Service Thoroughness and Consistency	112
SCHOOL DISTRICTS	
Overall Satisfaction.....	113
Timeliness	113
Websites.....	114
Service Thoroughness and Consistency	115

Table of Contents

SUMMARY	116
---------------	-----

VI. APPENDICES

A. Customer Service Surveys (Methodologies)A-1	
B. Endorsements	B-1
C. Cross-Endorsements	C-1
D. Certificates Granted to Out-of-State Teachers	D-1
E. Connecticut's NASDTEC Interstate Agreements Regarding Educator Certifications .	E-1
F. Certification in the Northeast	F-1
G. Certificate Issued When Initial or Provisional Educator Certificate Has Expired or Will Soon Expire.....	G-1
H. Praxis Panel Standards-Setting Process	H-1
I. Praxis I and II Passing Rates	I-1
J. Connecticut's Praxis Standards	J-1
K. NAEP Assessment Scores by State, 2007	K-1
L. District Reference Groups (DRGs)	L-1
M. Public Safety and Certification	M-1
N. Convictions That Lead to Automatic Revocation of Education Certificate, Permit, or Authorization	N-1
O. Agency Response to Report.....	O-1

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Executive Summary

Teacher Certification Program Implementation

The Legislative Program Review and Investigations Committee authorized a study of Connecticut's teacher certification program implementation in April 2008. The program's overall purpose is to ensure public school teachers are teaching in accordance with the certification standards and requirements approved by the State Board of Education. The study is the last part of a two-phase study of teacher certification in Connecticut. The committee completed its first phase – a review of the Beginning Educator Support and Training program – last year (2007).

This study mainly focused on the operations within the State Department of Education's Teacher Certification Unit, assessing whether the unit's administration of the certification system is efficient and responsive to teachers and other customers served. Other areas for analysis outlined in the study scope included: current certification requirements for experienced teachers, including changes over time and current efforts to revise the requirements; the department's organization and resources to fulfill its role in the teacher certification process; SDE's efforts to implement and consistently apply teacher certification requirements; reciprocity with other states for certification purposes; continuing education requirements for teachers and SDE's current effort to modify the requirements; and the process used to ensure school districts comply with the state's certification requirements for educators.

Feedback from a variety of constituencies, including information presented at the committee's public hearing on this topic, was collected during the study. Careful consideration was given to the comments, concerns, and ideas expressed through interviews, surveys, and testimony received as this set of findings and recommendations was developed. The report's key findings are summarized below, and the committee's full recommendations also are provided.

Teacher Certification Requirements

The State Department of Education made a major attempt to revamp its certification requirements for teachers in the late 1990s. The effort changed certification regulations as a way to ensure classroom teachers were qualified to meet the learning needs of an increasingly diverse student population. In 2003, however, the legislature – acting on the State Board of Education's request – postponed the regulations prior to the implementation date, and the regulations were subsequently repealed through the regulations review process.

A second attempt to overhaul the certification regulations is underway now, with changes based, in part, on federal requirements and the needs of Connecticut's students and teachers. The education department has been shaping and attempting to build support for major changes to the certification structure and endorsement requirements over the past four years.

The department is trying to implement certification requirements it believes will ensure teachers are prepared to teach the wide range of student learners in schools across the state. Chief among this report's analysis of those changes is the process SDE has used to develop the

proposed changes, circulate information about the changes among stakeholders, and garner support for the changes in an effort to avoid a result similar to when the last major attempt to change teacher certification regulations occurred. The department appears to have made a more proactive effort to receive input from education constituencies, compared to the last time certification revisions were considered.

The report further examines the state's current teacher certification requirements as well as the potential changes, and focuses on whether those requirements have been associated with higher student achievement by education researchers. Researchers agree that a few key aspects of teacher preparation required or being considered by Connecticut generally do not positively impact student learning. In those cases, the committee recommends the education department re-examine the requirements or proposals, in light of the research and teacher shortages.

One key area of the current requirements where there seems to be wide consensus among education constituencies in Connecticut – including many within SDE – is that continuing education for teachers is not effective in some districts. A series of recommendations are made to shift Connecticut's education community from a continuing education coursework model to more meaningful professional development with the clear, overarching goal of improving teacher quality and student achievement.

Compliance with Certification Requirements

The total number of employed educators found lacking proper certification at the end of the last three school years is minimal in relation to the total number of educators certified in the state during those years. However, the potential number of students taught daily by teachers who are not appropriately certified in Connecticut could be several thousand.

Formal communication from the SDE commissioner to school districts regarding certification compliance issues does not occur until near the end of the school year, meaning districts technically have a full school year to submit their required compliance information to SDE. Therefore, teachers not appropriately certified may remain teaching for many months during a school year, if not an entire school year, under the department's current compliance process. The State Board of Education has not addressed the issue of compliance and does not use its statutory authority to require school districts to comply with state educator certification requirements.

Certification Unit Operations

The report finds the operations within the certification unit to process and review certification applications mostly effective and efficient. Analysis of certification processing was limited to a degree because many of the current processing procedures will change or become obsolete when the department implements its new web-based certification system anticipated in early 2009. The new system is designed to improve the certification process for educators and enhance the performance of the certification unit. However, increased checks on whether applications are properly evaluated are needed. The study makes findings and recommendations to increase the level of management oversight of the unit, track the quality and quantity of

teachers' professional development activities, and provide oversight of the continuing education audit process.

Management Oversight

There is little oversight conducted of certification output and staff at the unit level, and none at the broader division level within the department. At the unit level, the quantity of certifications, permits, and authorizations produced per analyst seems to be one of the only outcomes that is consistently measured and reviewed. Other key aspects of performance are not formally assessed, including the quality of application reviews and the quality and quantity of continuing education unit audits.

Customer Service

The certification unit received high marks from educators and school districts for the unit's services and information provided to customers, as determined by two surveys conducted by committee staff. Districts tended to give more favorable ratings than educators across four key customer service components. Roughly 90 percent of responding districts and 80 percent of responding educators were satisfied with the unit's overall services. The committee believes the unit should strive further to ensure its customers continue to receive prompt, thorough, and complete service and information.

Committee Recommendations

- 1. The State Department of Education should consider providing the resources necessary to give the certification unit manager the ability to monitor certification analysts' workloads using the new certification system.**
- 2. The State Department of Education's certification unit management should periodically review application materials and the certification decisions made by analysts, to ensure applications are being properly processed.**
- 3. The State Department of Education should change its transcript review policies by reviewing the coursework of 25 percent of graduates (with at least one review of a candidate from each endorsement area) for Connecticut educator preparation programs that will be undergoing state accreditation review or are on accreditation probation, and expanding the review to include all graduates if any problems are found. At the same time, the current policy of reviewing the coursework of about 10 percent of all Connecticut educator preparation programs' graduates should remain unchanged.**
- 4. C.G.S. Sec. 10-145b(m) shall be amended to require local and regional boards of education to report to the Commissioner of Education the name of any certified employee dismissed for misconduct.**

5. The State Department of Education should use the new certification system's CEU-related abilities to implement oversight of CEU audits by tracking the quantity of the audits and conducting occasional checks of the audit quality.
6. The State Department of Education should periodically remind districts that Connecticut law requires professional development offerings be developed with the input of teachers.
7. The State Department of Education should more effectively oversee certification at both the unit and division levels. This includes developing performance measures and objectives of key functions within the unit and monitoring the unit's performance based on those measures and objectives.
8. The State Department of Education's certification unit, as part of its management oversight process, should periodically elicit feedback from its customers to determine satisfaction with: 1) the unit's timeliness in responding to calls and e-mail, and in processing certification applications; and 2) the overall thoroughness and completeness of the information provided to educators, districts, and the general public. The techniques used to receive such feedback should be determined by the certification unit.
9. The State Department of Education should implement an on site monitoring program as part of its overall system of ensuring school districts and educators fully comply with the state's certification requirements. Spot audits of a random sample of districts should be made annually, with an audit of each district in Connecticut occurring at least once every five years. More frequent audits of districts with substantial or perennial problems should be made. As part of any on site compliance audit, the department should offer districts technical assistance and support to improve districts' overall efforts to comply with state educator certification requirements and the ability of internal systems within districts to produce accurate, timely, and complete compliance information. The department should determine the extent of the new on site inspection program and seek additional resources commensurate with the new monitoring efforts.
10. The State Board of Education should make compliance with state certification standards among school districts more of a priority at the board level. The board should take a more proactive approach to ensuring school districts and educators fully comply with the state's certification standards on a regular basis, including publically releasing the names of school districts in non-compliance and applying the board's authority in accordance with C.G.S. Sec. 10-145(b) when necessary.
11. The only formal notification from the state education department to school district superintendents and local/regional boards of education chairpersons should come directly from the commissioner within five business days of when a district does not submit the required compliance information upon first request. If the necessary information regarding the corrective actions taken by a district is not received

within 10 business days of receipt of the commissioner's letter, the matter should be forwarded to the State Board of Education for action. The state education board, or a designated committee thereof, should begin the process of enforcing compliance in accordance with the board's statutory authority.

12. The State Department of Education and the Teachers' Retirement Board should determine by February 1, 2009, the most effective process between the two agencies for ensuring teachers are provided proper retirement credit based on their state certification status. SDE should begin sending information to TRB on teachers not properly certified as soon as it becomes available through the annual compliance report generated by the education department.
13. The State Department of Education should ensure its new automated certification system will have the full capacity to allow the department to monitor school districts' compliance with state certification requirements for educators throughout the year instead of the current process, which is based on a one-time compliance report generated annually.
14. The State Department of Education should continue to involve all pertinent stakeholders as changes in regulations are put forth, allow more discourse for understanding to be reached when there is disagreement over a particular proposal, and adjust its certification proposals when necessary to advance the state's educational goals, including improved student achievement.
15. The State Department of Education should consider whether to expand coursework reciprocity to graduates of NCATE-accredited teacher preparation programs and to graduates of alternate route programs in NASDTEC interstate agreement states.
16. The State Department of Education should consider accepting within its current certification proposals related majors in both teacher shortage subject areas and non-shortage areas, leaving in place the subject knowledge test requirement (Praxis II or foreign language test).
17. The State Department of Education should consider whether an interdisciplinary major should be required for elementary education teachers, rather than giving those teachers a choice between a subject major and an interdisciplinary major.
18. The State Department of Education should consider whether the precise or related major requirement should be changed to a moderate content area coursework requirement, leaving in place the subject knowledge test requirement.
19. The State Department of Education should reconsider requiring the coursework to move to professional certification be at the graduate level. The department also should consider whether 30 credits beyond the bachelor's degree should be required for certification purposes.

- 20. The State Department of Education should seek and use input from Connecticut's education stakeholders in considering whether the recommendations regarding teacher coursework requirements should be adopted.**
- 21. C.G.S. Sec. 10-145b(l)(1) shall be amended to require each teacher holding the state's highest-level certification shows the teacher has engaged in meaningful professional development over the duration of the highest-level certificate. The teacher must demonstrate, in a format and in accordance with standards and guidelines developed by the State Department of Education, that each professional development effort was: 1) substantial in duration; 2) connected to student learning and teaching in a subject for which the teacher holds or is pursuing an endorsement; 3) involving the teacher applying in the classroom what was learned; and 4) aligned with state teaching standards and the needs of the teacher's district and students.**

The State Department of Education should develop a list of activities that are acceptable forms of professional development. Such activities must first be connected to improving teaching or, secondarily, obtaining a cross-endorsement. At minimum, the list should include the following activities (in no particular order):

- 1) formally mentoring one or more beginning teachers;**
 - 2) participating in or leading district or school level committees, initiatives, or seminars on any of the following topics: a) developing and/or teaching a new curriculum; b) assessing students (including development of assessments) and using assessment data to adjust instruction; c) differentiating instruction for diverse learners; and d) obtaining school accreditation;**
 - 3) completing coursework to obtain a cross-endorsement;**
 - 4) completing a research project that is focused on improving student learning;**
 - 5) serving as a teacher-in-residence at the State Department of Education; and**
 - 6) working on obtaining certification by the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards.**
- 22. The State Department of Education, as part of its forthcoming initiative to produce new teacher evaluation standards, should require a teacher's professional development efforts be discussed and considered as part of the district's teacher evaluation process.**
- 23. Prior to adoption of the new professional development requirements, the State Department of Education – as part of its current stakeholders committee process – should begin discussing the framework of a proper oversight and approval mechanism for the new professional development system for teachers. The department should use the framework to fully develop its administrative structure for a professional development oversight and approval process.**

- 24. The State Department of Education should make a stronger effort to draw assessment panelists from the broader education community. The department should consider asking all principals and department chairs to: 1) apply to be panelists; and 2) suggest teachers and colleagues as panel nominees.**
- 25. The State Department of Education should convene small panels of educators every five years to re-evaluate whether the basic skills and content area assessments and assessment standards remain appropriate.**
- 26. The State Department of Education should continue its efforts in developing testing reciprocity with Massachusetts and New York and periodically report on its progress to the State Board of Education.**

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Introduction

Teacher Certification Program Implementation

Public school teachers in Connecticut must hold a valid certificate issued by the State Department of Education (SDE) in order to teach. Roughly 43,000 full-time equivalent teachers are certified and teaching in the state. The education department has a process in place to review and act on the thousands of applications it receives annually for certification.

Over the years, Connecticut has modified its teacher certification requirements with the intent of increasing the overall quality of teachers in the state. The state's Education Enhancement Act in 1986 replaced the previous two-tiered teacher certification system with a three-tiered structure, instituted a professional development requirement, and mandated beginning teachers complete an assessment program in order to maintain state certification. These teacher certification requirements have been in place for over 20 years. The certification requirements and potential changes to them may impact not only teacher quality but also the state's ability to attract and retain teachers.

Study Focus

The program review committee's study of the implementation of teacher certification in Connecticut focused on the operations within SDE's Teacher Certification Unit, assessing whether the department's administration of the certification system is efficient and responsive to teachers and other customers served. The study is the last phase of a two-phase study of teacher certification in Connecticut. The committee completed its first phase – a review of the Beginning Educator Support and Training program – last year.

The scope of study, approved by the committee in April 2008, outlined several specific areas for staff to analyze. Principally, the committee was interested in: 1) the current certification requirements for experienced teachers and how the requirements have changed over time, including SDE's present effort to revise the requirements; 2) the organization and resources within the department to fulfill its role in the teacher certification process; 3) SDE's efforts to implement and consistently apply teacher certification requirements; 4) reciprocity with other states for certification purposes; 5) the continuing education requirements for teachers and SDE's current effort to modify the requirements; and 6) the process used to ensure school districts comply with the state's certification requirements for educators.

Methodology

A variety of information sources was used for this report. Committee staff conducted extensive interviews of the various constituencies associated with teacher certification, including the State Department of Education, the state's two teachers' unions, teacher preparation programs, and several private organizations in Connecticut focused on studying education issues. Committee staff also observed sessions held by SDE with stakeholders as part of a broader effort to involve stakeholders in the process for revising certification regulations. An extensive literature search was conducted, SDE certification program information and data were reviewed,

and information about certification in other states was collected. State and federal statutes and regulations were reviewed, as was relevant information collected under Phase I of the project.

Key sources of information for this report included the results of two surveys conducted by committee staff. The surveys served as an important method for receiving feedback from educators and school districts regarding the state's process for certifying educators. A full description of the survey methodologies and copies of the survey materials sent to educators and districts are included in Appendix A.

Report Organization

This report is organized into four chapters, each containing analysis, findings, and recommendations. Chapter I provides an overview of the state's teacher certification requirements, including past changes to the requirements and the current set of proposals to modify the requirements. Chapter II assesses the State Department of Education's efforts to ensure school districts comply with the state's certification requirements for educators and assign staff only to positions for which they are appropriately certified. Chapter III examines the operations within the department's Teacher Certification Unit for overall efficiency and effectiveness. Chapter IV summarizes the results of the two surveys conducted by committee staff to gauge the satisfaction levels of educators and school districts with the certification unit's customer service.

Agency Response

It is the policy of the Legislative Program Review and Investigations Committee to provide agencies subject to a study with an opportunity to review and comment on the recommendations prior to publication of the final report. Appendix O contains the response from the State Department of Education.

Chapter I: Teacher Certification Requirements

A person is eligible to work for a local or regional board of education as an educator only after successfully completing specific requirements for certification detailed in state statute and regulation. There are different types of certificates issued depending on a person's position and responsibilities within a school district. The State Board of Education (SBE) is responsible for adopting the state certification requirements, while the State Department of Education, as the SBE's administrative arm, ensures the requirements are implemented.

Obtaining a state educator certificate does not guarantee someone employment within a school district; individual boards of education are responsible for hiring decisions. Certification means the holder has met the state's academic, experience, and assessment standards established for certain categories of public school employees. The state also issues permits or authorizations for some types of school employees, such as coaches and long-term substitute teachers, instead of certificates. Permits and authorizations have separate requirements and are granted under different circumstances than certificates.

Specifically for teachers, appropriate state certification is required for any local or regional school district employee who: 1) is not directly supervised in delivering instructional services by a certified professional employee in a position requiring certification; 2) is responsible for planning an instructional program for a student; 3) evaluates student progress; or 4) does not receive specific directions from a supervising teacher or administrator that constitute a lesson plan for each lesson.

In addition to teachers, the other public school employees who must receive state certification before they can be employed by a school district in Connecticut are:

- administrators and superintendents;
- student support services personnel (school social workers, speech pathologists, school counselors, and school psychologists);
- vocational/technical educators; and
- educators who teach adults.

This chapter provides an overview of the key state certification requirements for teachers. To obtain certification, teachers must meet education and assessment requirements common to all subject areas, as well as certain requirements specific to their areas. *Connecticut education stakeholders, including the education department, teachers' unions, and boards of education, agree that the purpose of certification is to establish minimum standards of competence and believe it is appropriate for the state to certify teachers.*

State certification requirements, as enumerated in statute and regulation, have not changed in more than two decades. Recently, SDE's certification unit has been disseminating and hearing feedback on a set of proposals that would revise: 1) the knowledge and skills with which beginning teachers are expected to enter the profession, and 2) the continuing education

requirements veteran teachers must complete to retain certification. As a result, this study involved examining the:

- current and proposed certification requirements in the context of this study;
- assessment development process and requirements;
- past and current efforts to change the state’s certification requirements;
- rationale for key changes being discussed; and
- relationship of certification to Connecticut’s student achievement gap.

CERTIFICATION STRUCTURE

Educator Continuum

There are three levels of certification for public school teachers in Connecticut: *Initial Educator*, *Provisional Educator*, and *Professional Educator*, which together make up what is termed the educator certification continuum. As summarized in Table I-1, each level is based on teachers meeting core assessment, education, and professional experience requirements as codified in state law. The table highlights the type of teaching certificate, the duration of the certificate, and the requirements to earn or maintain the certificate for teachers who either completed their teacher preparation program in Connecticut or have teaching experience in a public or approved nonpublic school (e.g., parochial school) in Connecticut. A summary of how teachers from other states attain Connecticut certification is provided later in this chapter, as are more detailed descriptions of each certificate level and summaries of selected permits and authorizations.

Table I-1. State Teaching Certificates: Summary of Core Eligibility Requirements (for applicants either completing a Connecticut teacher preparation program or with previous in-state teaching experience)		
<i>Type of Certificate</i>	<i>Duration</i>	<i>Core Eligibility Requirements</i>
Initial Educator (Level 1)	Up to 3 years*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed a teacher preparation program in the field and at the grade level for which a certification endorsement is requested; passed required basic skills and content area assessments; and fulfilled special education requirement OR • Completed two years (20 school months) of appropriate successful teaching in an approved nonpublic school; completed all coursework for the requested certification endorsement; passed required basic skills and content area assessments; and fulfilled special education requirement
Provisional Educator (Level 2)	Up to 8 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successfully completed the requirements for the initial educator certificate and: 1) successfully completed BEST program, as applicable, and at least one year (10 school months) of successful teaching

		(including permanent substitute teacher) in a public school OR 2) completed at least three years (30 school months) of successful teaching in an approved nonpublic school within 10 years of applying for provisional certificate
Professional Educator (Level 3)	5 years (continuation every 5 years)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed three years (30 school months) of successful teaching in a public school or approved nonpublic school while holding a provisional certificate AND successfully completed at least 30 semester hours of college credit beyond a bachelor's degree Must complete at least 90 hours of continuing education taught by an SDE-approved provider during each five-year continuation period
*Renewals available under certain circumstances. Source: R.C.S.A. Secs. 10-145d-409 through 610.		

The current three-level certification system was established by the Education Enhancement Act (EEA) and went into effect in 1989. Prior to the current structure, only two levels of certification for teachers existed: *provisional* and *standard*. At that time, once a teacher obtained a standard certificate, the license did not expire and was valid for the remainder of the teacher's career. The EEA created a new certificate level – initial educator – that had additional assessment requirements for teachers entering the profession in Connecticut. In addition, experienced teachers at the new highest-level certificate – professional educator – were now required to meet certain continuing education requirements every five years of employment to maintain their certification.

Certificates. Table I-2 shows the total number of initial, provisional, and professional educator certificates on record with SDE. The table includes teachers with certificates who are and are not currently teaching under those certificates as of April 2008. Almost half of the educators in Connecticut with certificates hold a professional educator certificate, followed by those with provisional certificates (31%) and initial certificates (22%).

Table I-2. Certificates by Type (April 2008)*		
<i>Certificate Type</i>	<i>Certificates (n=86,488)</i>	<i>Percent of Total (rounded)</i>
Initial Educator Certificate	18,871	22%
Provisional Educator Certificate	26,535	31%
Professional Educator Certificate	41,082	48%
*Includes teachers with active certificates who are and are not teaching under those certificates. Source of data: State Department of Education		

Endorsements

In addition to teachers needing to fulfill the core requirements for state certification at the initial, provisional, or professional levels, they are required to hold a subject area “endorsement” for each subject they wish to teach. All teachers must have at least one particular area of practice connected to their certification through an endorsement in order to teach in a public school. The endorsement specifies both subject area and groups of grade levels (e.g., secondary).

Table I-3 shows the endorsements available to teachers. In addition to teachers, endorsements are required for administrators, support services personnel, vocational-technical teachers, and adult educators. There are 50 endorsements specifically for teachers, and another 19 for the four other categories, totaling 69 endorsement areas among the five groups.

Each endorsement includes a set of specific requirements that must be met before issuance by SDE. The individual requirements for each of the 50 teacher endorsements are numerous, and are summarized in Appendix B.

An endorsement shows that a teacher has met the minimum content knowledge and teaching skills for a particular subject area at a certain grade level group as established by the State Board of Education. For example, an educator who has a teaching certificate with an endorsement in elementary education is considered to have the knowledge and skills to teach an elementary school class. As a result, this teacher would not be permitted to teach history at the high school level, which requires a different endorsement.

Cross endorsement. Teachers holding a valid certificate with specific endorsements¹ may apply for additional endorsements. For example, a teacher with an endorsement to teach high school physics may also wish to teach high school math, which is a separate endorsement area. In order to receive the high school math endorsement, the teacher must first meet the requirements for that math endorsement, including attaining at least the minimum score on the appropriate Praxis II subject-area exam and completing necessary coursework.

Certification regulations generally require the completion of a total of 30 semester hours of credit (undergraduate or graduate) in the subject area for each teaching endorsement. Specific topics or courses within the subject, however, are required in certain areas, including: 1) early childhood, 2) special education, 3) remedial reading and language arts education, 4) school library media specialist, 4) foreign languages, and 5) science (biology, chemistry, physics, earth science and general science). In some cases, field experiences, student teaching, or practica may be required. If no specific coursework is required, any course in that subject area is acceptable, provided a teacher meets the total number of credits necessary for the new endorsement. The specific cross-endorsement areas and required additional coursework are provided in Appendix C.

¹ Cross-endorsements are available within the early childhood, elementary, middle school grades, secondary academic subjects, special subjects, single-subject special education, or comprehensive special education endorsement areas.

Table I-3. Teacher Endorsement Areas	
<i>Endorsement Title</i>	<i>Endorsement Title</i>
Business Education, 7-12*	Music, Pre-K-12
Elementary, K-6	Partially Sighted, Pre-K-12
English, 7-12	Hearing Impaired, Pre-K-12
French, 7-12	Blind, Pre-K-12
German, 7-12	School Library Media Specialist
Italian, 7-12	School Nurse – Teacher
Latin, 7-12	School Dental Hygienist – Teacher
Russian, 7-12	Teacher - Coordinator, Marketing Education, 7-12
Spanish, 7-12	World Language Instruction Elem. Level, Pre-K-8
Other World Language, 7-12	Remedial Reading & Remedial Language Arts, 1-12
History & Social Studies, 7-12	Cooperative Work Education/ Diversified Occupations
Mathematics, 7-12	Unique Subject Area Endorsement
Biology, 7-12	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages, Pre-K-12
Chemistry, 7-12	Integrated Early Childhood/ Special Ed., Birth-K
Physics, 7-12	Integrated Early Childhood/ Special Ed., N-K-Elem. 1-3
Earth Science, 7-12	Comprehensive Special Ed., K-12
General Science, 7-12	English, Middle School
Driver Education	History & Social Studies, Middle School
Agriculture, Pre-K-12	Mathematics, Middle School
Vocational Agriculture, 7-12	Biology, Middle School
Art, Pre-K-12	Chemistry, Middle School
Health, Pre-K-12	Physics, Middle School
Physical Education, Pre-K-12	Earth Science, Middle School
Home Economics, Pre-K-12	General Science, Middle School
Technology Education, Pre-K-12	Integrated General Science, Middle School
<p>* A 7-12 endorsement, which is a subject area endorsement, allows the holder to teach the particular subject area not only at grades 7-12, but also at grades 5 and 6 in a departmentalized setting.</p> <p>Source: SDE</p>	

Table I-4 shows the number of endorsements for all active certificates, authorizations, and permits as of April 2008. The table indicates most teachers (62 percent) have one endorsement, while another 20 percent have two endorsements. The category of zero endorsements is for those permit areas where no endorsement is required, such as coaches and substitute teachers. Educators who hold a teaching certificate are required to have at least one subject area endorsement that must correspond to their specific teaching assignment.

Table I-4. Number of Endorsements per Certificate or Authorization (April 2008)		
<i>Number of Endorsements</i>	<i>Total (n=96,833)</i>	<i>Percent of Total</i>
Zero	8,798	9.0
One	59,810	61.7
Two	19,669	20.3
Three	6,169	6.4
Four	1,635	1.7
Five	500	0.5
Six	180	0.2
Seven	49	--
Eight	13	--
Nine	7	--
Ten	3	--
Note: The sum of the total column does not equal the number of certified educators because educators can have multiple certificates in different areas (e.g., administrator and teaching). Source of data: SDE		

Option in lieu of coursework. Applicants for cross endorsements have the option of taking a College-Level Examination Program² (CLEP) exam instead of the required college-level coursework for that endorsement. Successful completion of a CLEP exam must be posted on an official transcript from a regionally accredited institution for college credit. SDE does not accept CLEP examinations that duplicate previously completed coursework.

Reciprocity

Connecticut generally recognizes teacher preparation coursework completed in other states for certification purposes. The coursework must have been completed at a state-approved program within a regionally accredited higher education institution. Whether teachers coming to Connecticut need to complete additional coursework, depends on where they completed their formal teacher preparation program.

SDE entered into the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC) Interstate Agreement (NIA) in the late 1980s. The NIA facilitates the movement of educators among the member states and jurisdictions of NASDTEC that have signed the interstate agreement. Although the agreement makes it possible for an educator who completed an approved program and/or who holds a certificate or license in one jurisdiction to

² CLEP is a credit-by-examination program helping students earn college credit for what they already know, regardless of how that knowledge was acquired. By receiving a satisfactory score on a specified examination, students can earn from 3 to 12 college credits toward a college degree for each CLEP exam taken. The program is administered by The College Board, which is a not-for-profit membership association whose mission is to connect students to college success and opportunity through an association of more than 5,400 schools, colleges, universities, and other educational organizations.

more easily earn a certificate in another state or jurisdiction, receiving states may impose certain special requirements that must be met in a reasonable period of time.³

Interim certification. An applicant who completed a teacher preparation program at a regionally accredited out-of-state institution and/or has teaching experience in another state but has not completed either the assessment requirements for Connecticut's initial educator certificate or the special education course of study, may be eligible for a one-year *interim* educator certificate. An interim certificate allows the applicant to defer fulfilling the assessment or special education study certification requirements for up to one year. Interim certificates are nonrenewable, and all Connecticut requirements must be fully met to obtain an initial educator certificate.

Regardless of the state of origin, incoming teachers must complete the required tests before receiving a full certificate. Teachers from states not participating with Connecticut in the NIA also must meet this state's specific requirements to receive certification. Some teachers may have taken the tests already, while others may teach in states where comparable testing is not required.

Upon completing all testing and coursework requirements, incoming teachers are given certificates with endorsements that are as close as possible to their previous endorsements. See Appendix D for how an out-of-state teacher's type of certificate is determined, according to academic and experience levels.

NASDTEC agreement states. Any state can join the NASDTEC Interstate Agreement. When a state decides to become a participant, it determines the specific areas of the agreement it will honor and the specific states' certificates it will acknowledge. States may choose to accept candidates from another state that does not acknowledge their state's candidates. For example, Connecticut does not recognize educators from Arizona under the terms of the NIA; however, Arizona may recognize Connecticut educators.

The NIA is on a five-year cycle; the current agreement is for 2005 through 2010. A few years before each renewal date, the central NASDTEC office collects information regarding states' teacher preparation program requirements and approval processes and distributes it to all participating states. Each state then individually analyzes the information to determine whether it wants to participate with a particular state under the NIA.

States may choose to recognize any of the following types of certifications: teacher, support staff, vocational teacher, or administrator. Connecticut recognizes certification from 38 states (including the District of Columbia) regarding teachers, 10 states for support staff, 7 states

³ Connecticut has signed agreements with other states for the following options: completion of a state-approved teacher preparation program at a regionally accredited institution; and completion of 27 months of full-time, successful teaching experience under a member state's appropriate full teaching credential completed within seven years of application for Connecticut certification. In addition to the college/university recommendation or verification of experience and licensure, candidates must meet the following requirements: hold a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution; meet all experience and degree requirements for the endorsement requested; and meet all assessment requirements. Connecticut does not have full acceptance of another state's certificate, or accept candidates from an out-of-state alternate route program without further requirements or documentation.

for vocational education teachers, and no states for administrators. Appendix E provides a list of those states.⁴

Beginning teachers. Teachers who completed an accredited preparation program or who successfully taught full-time in the same school for at least 27 but less than 30 school months⁵ under full certificates in states that Connecticut recognizes, are given initial educator certification upon applying to SDE.

Participation in the interstate agreement does not exempt out-of-state teachers from Connecticut's testing requirements for their particular endorsement(s). A new teacher who has not met the testing requirements will receive an interim initial certificate, which is a nonrenewable certificate valid for one year. During that time, the educator may teach and, by the interim certificate's expiration date, must successfully meet the testing requirements. Provided official documentation shows the required assessment is met, the teacher is issued full certification; no application is required if there is no lapse in certification.

Experienced teachers. Teachers who successfully taught full-time for at least three years under full certificates in states that Connecticut recognizes under the NIA will be given provisional educator certificates upon applying to SDE. The exception is teachers who are certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, who can receive professional certificates, as described later. Similar to beginning teachers, experienced teachers who have not yet met testing requirements specific to Connecticut receive a one-year interim provisional certificate to give them time to take the test.

Application evaluation. Applicants from states recognized by Connecticut need to submit for review: 1) either a recommendation from the higher education institution from which they graduated, and/or for those who have taught under a full certificate, a statement of successful teaching experience from their employer; 2) the certificate application form; and 3) transcripts to verify that the applicant has completed a bachelor's degree at an accredited institution and, if a beginning teacher, an approved teacher preparation program. The application evaluation process involving teachers from NIA states recognized by Connecticut is simpler than the normal application process from out-of-state applicants because program completion requirements are fully recognized by Connecticut, making in-depth transcript evaluation unnecessary. A cursory review of transcripts is conducted to verify the completion of the program as cited on the recommendation from the higher education institution.

Non-agreement states. Connecticut does not automatically recognize the preparation of teachers who are from states not participating in the NASDTEC Interstate Agreement. A teacher's coursework must meet all of Connecticut's requirements necessary for an endorsement to obtain either interim or full certification. Connecticut has made this decision because SDE

⁴ All states party to the NASDTEC teacher agreement recognize Connecticut certification and preparation; according to the NASDTEC website, as of 2006 only Alaska, Iowa, and Minnesota were not party.

⁵ Because in any state full certification is awarded only to those who have completed an approved teacher preparation program, the NASDTEC experience option of teaching for at least 27 months only has the effect of allowing alternate route graduates who have taught to become certified in other states. For example, Connecticut does not accept graduating from another state's alternate route program as sufficient preparation for new teachers under the NASDTEC Agreement, but will recognize these graduates for certification once they have taught for 27 months under their originating state's full certificate.

believes some states' teacher preparation program requirements and/or processes for approving the programs are not comparable to this state's.

Beginning and veteran teachers. The type and level of certification granted depends on which requirements teachers meet and how much experience they have. Beginning and veteran teachers must meet all the same testing and coursework requirements. SDE notes that many applicants from non-NIA states typically have either met all the requirements or are very close to doing so (with the exception of alternate route teachers).

If the teacher is missing only the testing and/or the special education coursework required by Connecticut, an interim certificate (at the level appropriate to his or her teaching experience) is given. If the teacher is missing any other required coursework – in U.S. history, education, or the subject/area of the endorsement – then no certificate can be granted until all of these requirements have been met. When there is a coursework deficiency, SDE encourages the applicant to meet the requirement quickly by taking the appropriate College Level Examination Program test or enrolling in online or community college courses.

If the teacher has met all the requirements, full certification at either the initial or provisional levels is granted. A teacher who has completed all the requirements and successfully taught for at least three years under a full certificate will receive a provisional certificate; one who has successfully taught for less than three years or not at all will be given an initial certificate.

Special Cases

National Board certification. State law allows National Board-certified teachers who move to Connecticut and have taught for at least three of the last ten years to receive a certificate without needing to meet any of the state's testing and coursework requirements.⁶ Educators who lack 30 credits beyond a bachelor's degree are issued a provisional certificate, while those who have such credit are given a professional certificate.

National Board-certified teachers are the only out-of-state educators who may be issued a professional certificate. All others must teach for at least three school years in Connecticut under a provisional certificate and have 30 post-baccalaureate credits before moving to the professional level.

Applicants completing education in foreign countries. Applicants educated outside the United States must meet current certification requirements, including coursework and assessments, to be eligible for Connecticut certification. SDE, however, does not directly evaluate the credentials of foreign-educated applicants for Connecticut teacher certification. Applicants who completed any postsecondary education outside the United States need to have their credentials evaluated by one of seven agencies specializing in the review of education transcripts from foreign countries and currently approved by the State Department of Education. Applicants must have one of these agencies review their credentials prior to submitting a certification application to SDE. The agencies will provide advisory, course-by-course

⁶ C.G.S. Sec. 10-145b(k)(2)

interpretations directly to the requesting individuals. SDE will review an application with foreign education coursework only upon receipt of the required credentials evaluation.

Candidates with foreign education must submit a course-by-course analysis of their university's general academic, subject area, and program preparation coursework in addition to appropriate verification of any teaching experience completed in a foreign country and any accompanying license or certificate authorizing the experience. In cases where the original verification of teaching experience or the teaching license or authorization is printed in a language other than English, the original copy of the document must be accompanied by a translated, notarized copy of all information contained on the original verification.

Donation of time by private sector specialists. State law allows any local or regional school district to use private sector specialists donated by businesses to teach in fields designated by SBE as areas with demonstrated shortages of certified teachers or areas with projected workforce shortages. The specialist does not need to, but could be, certified to teach in Connecticut. Specialists are permitted to offer instruction in existing or specially designed curricula, although no specialist: 1) is permitted to work more than half the maximum classroom hours of a certified teacher; 2) may have sole responsibility for a classroom; and 3) may displace or replace any certified teacher.

Other Certificates, Permits, and Authorizations

In addition to the three certificates for teachers – initial, provisional, and professional – there are several other types of certificates, permits, and authorizations. These credentials serve different purposes and have less rigorous requirements than the standard three certificates; a full listing is provided in Table I-5 followed by a summary of several of the categories.

Durational shortage area permit. Districts may receive Durational Shortage Area Permits (DSAPs) to fill positions for which certified teachers are unavailable. According to SDE, districts needing teachers in high-demand fields such as secondary science, as well as urban and rural districts, seek DSAPs most often.

A district submits a written request to the department for a DSAP to cover a specific position. The district must describe the efforts made to hire a certified teacher and why any certified applicants for the position are unacceptable. The district must also explain why the teacher selected for a DSAP is the best candidate to fill the shortage. The district is further required to indicate that a plan will be established to provide proper supervision of and assistance to the permit holder, specifically that the district will incorporate an orientation to the district and at least ten classroom observations of or demonstrations for the teacher. Upon review and approval by the department, a one-year DSAP will be issued.

Teachers hired under a DSAP are required to: 1) have passed the basic skills exam; 2) hold a bachelor's degree from an approved institution; 3) be enrolled or intend to enroll in a teacher preparation program leading to certification in the subject area for which the permit is issued, unless completion of a preparation program is not required for certification in the subject area; and 4) have completed 12 semester hours of credit in that same subject area. Permit holders also are required to participate in the BEST mentoring program.

Table I-5. Additional Certificates, Permits, and Authorizations			
<i>Type</i>	<i>When Issued</i>	<i>Duration</i>	<i>Total Active (as of 4/08)</i>
Temporary 90-Day Certificate	• Successfully completed Alternate Route to Certification program	90 days upon renewal	29
Interim Educator Certificate (includes initial, provisional levels)	• Educators needing to complete CT assessment(s) and/or specific coursework for certification	1 year (nonrenewable)	843
Temporary Minor Assignment	• Certified teachers teaching in a temporary assignment of no more than two periods per day	1 year (max. 1 renewal)	44
Durational Shortage Area Permit (DSAP)	• District identifies teacher shortage area; applies to SDE for DSAP. Upon approval, permit issued to district.	1 year (max. 2 renewals)	400
International Teacher Permit	• Foreign applicants participating in a visiting foreign exchange	1 year (max. 2 renewals)	22
Substitute Teacher Authorization	• Substitute teacher assignments of up to 40 days in the same assignment, without bachelor's degree	Per occurrence	874
Substitute Teacher Authorization - Long Term	• Substitute teacher assignments of 40 days or longer in the same assignment	Per occurrence	208
Five-year renewable coaching permit	• Coaches of intramural or interscholastic athletics at elementary, middle, or high school level; includes athletic directors	5 years upon renewal	7,346
Temporary emergency coaching permit	• Coaches of intramural or interscholastic athletics at elementary, middle, or high school level	1 year (max. 1 renewal)	578
Source of data: SDE			

The DSAP may be re-issued no more than twice, for a total of three years of teaching in that position. A permit is re-issued if the permit holder has served successfully within the district and shows good academic standing, including completion of at least nine additional semester hours of credit in his or her teacher preparation program. If enrollment in a preparation program is not required, the permit holder must complete at least nine additional semester hours of credit prior to re-issuance. The department, at its discretion, may defer the additional credits upon request by the school district. If the permit holder meets all requirements in the endorsement area for which the permit has been issued, except successful completion of the BEST assessment, an initial educator certificate may be issued.

Temporary 90-day certificate. A temporary 90-day certificate is issued at the request of a school district to a candidate who has successfully completed an alternate route to certification program within Connecticut.⁷ The certificate is applicable to all the endorsement areas for which alternate route programs are available: early childhood education, elementary education, middle grades education, secondary academic subjects, special subjects, special education, and administration and supervision. The certificate is issued when the board of education employing the applicant makes a written request for the temporary certificate and attests that a special plan for supervision exists for the certificate holder. Applicants are required to hold a bachelor's degree with a major in or closely related to the area in which they will be teaching, pass the basic skills and content area exams, and abide by other requirements specified in state regulation.

A teacher working under a temporary certificate must be supervised during the 90-day period. Upon successful completion of the 90 days, the teacher becomes eligible to submit an application to SDE for an initial educator certificate.

Substitute teacher authorization. A substitute teacher authorization issued by SDE is only required if the substitute teacher is employed in the same assignment for 40 school days or more during a given school year. If the assignment is at the elementary level, at the secondary level, or in special education, the teacher must have a minimum of 12 semester hours of credit in the subject area being taught. Teachers currently holding a state certificate only need a substitute teacher authorization if their certificate is not subject- or grade-level appropriate for the assignment and they are in an assignment for 40 days or longer.

Substitute teachers must hold at least a bachelor's degree. Under certain circumstances, a school district may request a waiver to this requirement. SDE will review the request as long as the candidate meets certain requirements and has had previous experience with school age children. If a waiver is granted, the teacher may be in the same assignment for up to 40 days.

Coaching permit. Coaches involved in intramural or interscholastic athletics at the elementary, middle, or high school level must have a valid state coaching permit. Coaches are required to meet certain qualifications, including age, education, and training. Permits are valid for five years, and coaches must successfully complete a specific amount of time devoted to coaching and working with children to renew their permits. A coaching permit is necessary for any person to coach, regardless of whether an educator certificate is held. Athletic directors are also required to hold a coaching permit.

Fees

Fees for individual educator certificates are established in statute. The fee for each initial educator certificate issued is \$100, while there is a \$200 fee for each provisional certificate issued and a \$300 fee for each professional certificate issued. There are no fees for continuing a professional certificate or obtaining an authorization or permit.

⁷ A full description of Connecticut's ARC program may be found in the Legislative Program Review and Investigations Committee's 2007 study of the Beginning Educator Support and Training Program at: <http://www.cga.ct.gov/pri/index.htm>.

CERTIFICATE REQUIREMENTS: EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE

Each teacher must meet certain common education, experience, and assessment requirements to obtain and maintain a Connecticut certificate. (The certification requirements are different for particular teaching and non-teaching positions, such as administrators and school nurses teaching health.) This section describes in detail Connecticut's current education and experience requirements for each level of teaching certificate, proposed changes, other Northeastern states' comparable requirements, and research, and then makes recommendations as appropriate. Comparisons of the certification requirements of Northeastern states are found in Appendix F. Connecticut's assessment standards are detailed in the next section.

Researchers in the field of teacher preparation agree that the body of well-conducted research on the effectiveness of different teacher preparation aspects is somewhat small. Many studies have been based only on aggregate, incomplete data analysis (e.g., showing a higher percentage of teachers receiving certain preparation or credentials in a district is associated with better district-level overall student achievement but failing to rule out other potential explanations). Other studies have relied on teachers' own opinions, not on student achievement data, as a measurement of effect. *Researchers agree the literature has formed a consensus that knowledge of both subject matter and how to teach subjects (i.e., subject-specific pedagogy) – especially practice in teaching – is important in improving student performance, but it is not known exactly which levels of subject and pedagogical knowledge or teaching practice are necessary to have that positive effect.*⁸ Studies have not shown that, in most fields, credentials one might intuitively think are useful – such as a subject major or master's degree – do in fact lead to better student achievement.

One thorough study that may lead to useful information on how to prepare teachers to have a strong positive impact on student learning is currently being conducted, using data from New York City.⁹ The program review committee encourages SDE to keep abreast of emerging research on what aspects of teacher preparation improve student performance and promote these practices to teacher preparation programs.

Initial Educator Certificate

The initial educator certificate is the first level of state certification. All prospective teachers must fulfill several preparation and eligibility requirements to qualify for initial certification. Candidates must either have: 1) completed a teacher preparation program at a regionally accredited institution¹⁰ in the field and at the grade level for which accreditation is

⁸ "The Effect of Certification and Preparation on Teacher Quality," Donald Boyd, Daniel Goldhaber, Hamilton Lankford, and James Wyckoff, *Future of Children* 17(1), Spring 2007. Accessed October 21, 2008, at: http://www.futureofchildren.org/usr_doc/7_03.pdf. Also: *The Link Between Teacher Quality and Student Outcomes: A Research Synthesis*, Laura Goe, National Comprehensive Center on Teacher Quality, October 2007. Accessed September 5, 2008, at: <http://www.tqsource.org/publications/LinkBetweenTQandStudentOutcomes.pdf>

⁹ For more information on the study, see:

<http://www.teacherpolicyresearch.org/TeacherPathwaysProject/tabid/81/Default.aspx>.

¹⁰ Regional accreditation is a process of recognizing educational institutions for performance, integrity, and quality. In the United States, this recognition is extended largely through nongovernmental, voluntary membership associations that establish accreditation criteria, evaluate institutions against the criteria, and approve institutions that meet the criteria. There are six accrediting bodies nationwide, including the New England Association of

requested, having met the coursework requirements described below; or 2) in lieu of a formal teacher preparation program, successfully completed at least 20 school months (i.e., two years) of appropriate teaching experience in an approved nonpublic school¹¹ and meet all coursework requirements and assessment. All teacher candidates must also pass a basic skills test, Praxis I, which is discussed later in this chapter.

The initial educator certificate is valid for three years and may be re-issued for five additional three-year intervals for individuals not meeting the requirements of the second-level certificate (i.e., provisional educator certificate), as long as no certification requirements have changed between renewals. If changes have been made, the teacher must meet those requirements or the initial certificate will not be renewed after the fifth re-issuance until all requirements are met. Initial certificates are re-issued regardless of whether the certificate holder is employed as a teacher. After the fifth re-issuance, the initial certificate holder must meet all preparation and eligibility requirements in effect at the time of application and resubmit a formal application to SDE for a new initial certificate. There are other specific conditions upon which an initial educator certificate will be re-issued, which are shown in Appendix G (Table G-1).

Coursework requirements. State statutes and regulations currently require teachers to meet particular common coursework requirements, in addition to coursework specific to the endorsement area. All teachers who complete and are recommended for Connecticut certification by a teacher preparation program must meet the following requirements:

- credit hours in certain areas of professional education – foundations of education, educational psychology, and curriculum and methods – totaling either 18 or 30 (including field experience credits), depending on the endorsement;¹²
- a broad variety of academic coursework, with 39 credit hours in five of six academic areas (natural sciences, social studies, fine arts, English, mathematics, and foreign language);¹³
- a course in special education consisting of 36 clock hours of instruction that must include: 1) an understanding of the growth and development of exceptional children, including handicapped children, gifted and talented children, and children who require special education; and 2) methods for identifying, planning for, and working effectively with special needs children in a regular classroom;
- a three credit-hour course in U.S. history; and
- at least ten weeks of student teaching for six to twelve credit hours.

Schools and Colleges, which accredits colleges and universities in Connecticut. The accrediting bodies are recognized by the federal Department of Education as reliable authorities on the quality of education for the institutions they accredit.

¹¹ Substitute teaching is not considered toward fulfilling this requirement.

¹² Professional education must include coursework in technology skills, literacy, and second language learning.

¹³ Regional accreditation by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges requires baccalaureate-granting institutions to mandate all bachelor's students complete 40 credits in general education, including arts and humanities, math, science, and social science.

Connecticut teacher preparation programs' compliance with these requirements is checked by the certification unit as part of the state's teacher preparation program accreditation process.

Requirements for in-state and out-of-state applicants. There are multiple pathways for obtaining an initial certificate, depending on whether a candidate attended an in-state or out-of-state teacher preparation program or had previous experience in Connecticut or another state. The description below highlights the core requirements common to all applicants for initial certification, and the additional requirements for candidates educated or already teaching in another state.

Eligibility for initial certification differs whether applicants were educated and/or trained in Connecticut or another state. A further distinction is made for out-of-state applicants depending if Connecticut recognizes for certification purposes the credentials of teachers educated and/or the teaching experience from that state. Table I-6 shows the various ways applicants are eligible for initial certification in Connecticut.

Candidates from outside of Connecticut may meet requirements for certification if they have met the coursework requirements and either completed an approved educator preparation program from a regionally accredited institution outside of Connecticut or have appropriate teaching in another state under a valid certificate from that state. Certification eligibility is based upon a review of official transcripts, a recommendation from the preparing higher education institution, and/or verification of successful teaching experience from the district. When eligibility is determined, an applicant will receive the closest endorsement that is issued in Connecticut. All candidates applying for a Connecticut educator certificate, which requires completion of a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution, must submit official transcripts verifying completion of the degree, regardless of the basis of their certification.

SDE recognizes the completion of state-approved teacher preparation programs in states with which Connecticut has an interstate agreement as sufficient in meeting teacher coursework requirements.

The department does not recognize as adequate the completion of either preparation programs in states not recognized with an agreement or alternate route programs in any state. For an out-of-state applicant not covered by a coursework reciprocity agreement, SDE issues certification only when the teacher has met the precise general and endorsement-specific requirements.¹⁴ The department also does not give coursework reciprocity to graduates of programs approved by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), despite NCATE's accreditation standards being Connecticut's state approval standards. (See below for additional discussion regarding NCATE reciprocity.)

¹⁴ An applicant from another state who has not yet completed the 36-hour course in special education may receive a temporary, one-year interim certificate, which allows employment while the educator progresses toward completing the course.

Table I-6. Pathways to Initial Educator Certificate	
<i>Connecticut Teacher Preparation Program or Previous Experience</i>	
Teacher Preparation Program Only: No experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application review
Teaching Experience Only: No teacher preparation program (approved nonpublic school)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two school years of successful, full-time experience in same teaching assignment in same Connecticut approved nonpublic school • Thorough transcript review for specific endorsement requested
<i>Out-of-State Teacher Preparation Program or Previous Experience (Reciprocal State)</i>	
Accredited Teacher Preparation Program Only: No experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General transcript review
Experience Only: No teacher preparation program (public school or approved nonpublic school)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three school years of successful, full-time teaching experience (within past seven years) at Level 2 certificate (i.e., comparable to Connecticut's initial certificate) • General transcript review
<i>Out-of-State Teacher Preparation or Previous Experience (Non-Reciprocal State)</i>	
Accredited Teacher Preparation Program Only: No experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thorough transcript review for specific endorsement requested
Experience Only: No teacher preparation program (public School approved nonpublic school)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two school years of successful, full-time teaching in same public school or district under an appropriate state certificate • Thorough transcript review
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>General transcript review</i>: confirms the candidate has a bachelor's degree, completed student teaching assignment, and generally completed appropriate coursework for endorsement requested. • <i>Thorough transcript review</i>: confirms the candidate has a bachelor's degree and completed student teaching assignment, and includes a complete review of coursework to determine if such coursework meets Connecticut coursework standards (i.e., is comparable to coursework provided by Connecticut teacher preparation programs) for the endorsement(s) requested. 	
Source of data: SDE and PRI staff analysis	

Proposed changes. If SDE's proposed certification changes are adopted in essentially the current form on schedule, the areas of professional education coursework will change and

successful completion will be based on meeting certain key competencies for each area, instead of on obtaining a particular number of credit hours per area. Connecticut preparation programs will be required to show their recommended candidates have met the key competencies. As noted above, at the time of this study SDE was in the process of proposing certification changes. The draft (i.e., not yet finalized) areas of the competencies are: development and characteristics of learners, evidence-/standards-based instruction, evidence-based classroom and behavior management, assessment, and professional behaviors and responsibilities. The draft competency document states that the goal is to “ensure high achievement of all students.”

The impact of the change to competency-based programs on assessing the Connecticut certification eligibility of teachers from states lacking interstate agreements is unclear and an area being discussed by SDE and various stakeholders. The department is contemplating that all incoming teachers – regardless of state – could receive certification to allow employment. Then, within a few years of being certified, each incoming educator would need to complete professional development provided by regional educational service centers (RESCs) to show familiarity with this state’s expectations of teachers.

Outside the certification change process, Connecticut and other interstate agreement members are starting to consider whether completion of alternate route programs should be accepted under the interstate agreement. SDE notes alternate route programs vary substantially in quality but have recently proliferated, which means that they could help ease teacher shortages if a way is found to filter out inferior programs. The department is unsure whether this potential change could be adequately considered and developed by all the agreement states, in time for the new interstate agreement to begin in January 2011.

Other states. The other Northeastern states have coursework requirements to varying extents and are members of the interstate agreement. Massachusetts also accepts the preparation of teachers who attended NCATE-accredited programs.

Research. No studies were found by committee staff to examine empirically the impact of reciprocity policies on teacher supply and teacher quality.

The program review committee recommends the State Department of Education consider whether to expand coursework reciprocity to graduates of NCATE-accredited teacher preparation programs and to graduates of alternate route programs in NASDTEC interstate agreement states.

The committee believes the department should carefully examine whether expanding coursework reciprocity in these ways is appropriate. Broadening reciprocity policies has the potential to increase Connecticut’s supply of teachers but the risk of lessening teacher quality.

Recognizing the preparation of graduates from NCATE-accredited programs makes logical sense because those programs are judged on the same standards as Connecticut’s programs. The department, however, should be cautious in making this decision because NCATE accreditation might not be a sufficient indicator of program quality. A recent report

authored by the former president of Teachers College at Columbia University illustrated how one NCATE-accredited program fell far short of providing high-quality preparation.¹⁵

The decision over whether to recognize the preparation of graduates from alternate route programs in NIA states is similarly difficult. “Alternate route” is a broad term that can encompass programs based at universities, run by nonprofit organizations, created by school districts, overseen directly by state education agencies, and fraudulently created by diploma mills. A sufficient reciprocity policy would enable SDE to issue certification only to well-prepared alternate route graduates.

Content area knowledge: Subject major. Connecticut’s *middle* and *secondary* level teachers generally are required to have a subject major or its equivalent (30 credits) in the content area for which certification is sought.¹⁶ *Elementary* education teachers must either major in any academic area except education or have an interdisciplinary major with coursework in academic areas that are closely related, instead of a major consisting of coursework in just one area (e.g., sociology). As discussed later in this chapter, teachers also are required to meet the state’s content knowledge standards by obtaining a passing score on the relevant subject assessment(s) (Praxis II or the foreign language tests).

Proposed changes. SDE’s draft regulations call for accepting “closely related” majors for *secondary* level instruction in the shortage areas of math, the sciences, and English to increase the supply of teachers (e.g., a major in engineering or statistics could be considered sufficient for a secondary mathematics endorsement). For *elementary* education teachers, a restructured interdisciplinary major option would consist of coursework in each of the core subject areas the educator is expected to teach: nine credit hours each in math, reading and language arts, and science; and six hours in social studies. (Middle grades certification will be eliminated and secondary certification will be expanded to include grade six, due to the continued low prospective teacher demand for middle grades-specific preparation.)

Other states. At the *secondary* level, most Northeastern states require either a major (Vermont) or 30 credits in the content area (Connecticut, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, and Rhode Island). Maine requires 24 credits. Massachusetts has no credit-related requirement for an initial certificate but mandates a master’s degree related to the teaching area be obtained to earn a second-level certificate. For *elementary* education teachers, no other state in the region requires an academic subject area major. New Jersey requires either an academic subject area major, or a total of 60 credits in liberal arts and sciences subjects. Vermont accepts an elementary education major or 30 credits in elementary education and New Hampshire requires credits in each of the four core subjects taught at the level. Maine has an interdisciplinary course of study option.

¹⁵ *Educating School Teachers*, Arthur Levine, The Education Schools Project, September 2006. Accessed October 23, 2008, at: http://www.edschools.org/pdf/Educating_Teachers_Report.pdf.

¹⁶ There are three exceptions. First, teachers for most areas may have 30 credits in the academic area for which an endorsement is sought, when 9 additional credits are held in a related area (e.g., biology and chemistry). Second, at the middle grades level and for a few secondary content areas, interdisciplinary majors are allowed. Third, cross-endorsements have credit hour requirements, instead of a major requirement.

Research. There is a consensus among education researchers that some level of *subject knowledge* attained through postsecondary education most likely leads to better student achievement. The value of a *subject major*, however, lacks a research consensus. The body of methodologically sound, peer-reviewed studies, which is somewhat small, does not confirm that a teacher who majored in the subject being taught is more effective than one who did not, with the exception of secondary math and, to a lesser extent, secondary science.¹⁷ Less research has been conducted in non-math subjects, but high-quality studies generally have not found positive impacts.¹⁸ There is some evidence suggesting that elementary education teacher preparation in either elementary education or across content areas might improve performance.¹⁹

The program review committee recommends the State Department of Education consider accepting within its current certification proposals related majors in both teacher shortage subject areas and non-shortage areas, leaving in place the subject knowledge test requirement (Praxis II or foreign language test).

Accepting related majors for all subject areas is a policy that would treat prospective teachers consistently, regardless of field. The committee acknowledges the department for showing flexibility in an effort to ease teacher shortages and believes similar flexibility should be extended to potential teachers in non-shortage areas to maintain consistency across subject areas. The role of certification is to provide minimum competency standards; if the standard is changing to allow related majors for shortage areas, it should change for non-shortage areas as well, given that research has not proven the value of a subject major (other than for secondary mathematics, and possibly secondary science, which are shortage areas). The subject knowledge test requirement should remain in place to ensure teachers have sufficient grasp of the subject matter and are considered highly qualified under the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

The program review committee recommends the State Department of Education consider whether an interdisciplinary major should be required for elementary education teachers, rather than giving those teachers a choice between a subject major and an interdisciplinary major.

The department's new interdisciplinary major requirement would give elementary education teachers the subject knowledge they need to educate children in core subjects. In contrast, teachers who choose instead to complete a subject area major are not now and will not

¹⁷ "The Effect of Certification and Preparation on Teacher Quality," Donald Boyd, Daniel Goldhaber, Hamilton Lankford, and James Wyckoff, *Future of Children* 17(1), Spring 2007.

¹⁸ Ibid, and: *The Link Between Teacher Quality and Student Outcomes: A Research Synthesis*, Laura Goe, National Comprehensive Center on Teacher Quality, October 2007.

¹⁹ An Educational Testing Service (ETS) analysis of Praxis II passing rates found elementary education teachers who majored in elementary education substantially out-performed those who majored in other subjects, 94 percent to 75 percent. (*The Academic Quality of Prospective Teachers: The Impact of Admissions and Licensure Testing*, Drew H. Gitomer, Andrew S. Latham, and Robert Ziomek, ETS, 1999) ETS does not claim Praxis II is predictive of teacher effectiveness, but the test is supposed to be an accurate assessment of whether a prospective teacher possesses sufficient knowledge to teach. Another study, part of a comprehensive examination of teacher preparation and student achievement in New York City, recently found elementary teachers' preparation in math and teaching math to be associated with higher student test scores, although preparation in language arts did not appear to have an impact. (*Teacher Preparation and Student Achievement*, Don Boyd, Pam Grossman, Hamp Lankford, Susanna Loeb, and Jim Wyckoff, Teacher Pathways Project, August 2008.)

be in the future specifically required to complete any coursework in math, science, and social studies as part of teacher preparation. It seems logical that all elementary education teachers need some preparation in each subject they are expected to teach. Under the current certification requirements, an elementary teacher needs to take only a small amount of credits in social studies and could avoid taking science or math coursework altogether.²⁰

Requiring an interdisciplinary major for elementary education teachers could be a feasible way to ensure adequate elementary education subject knowledge preparation. An alternative would be to require a teacher to complete coursework in each of the four core subjects, but this option has two problems. First, finishing more coursework and a subject area major would not be possible within the current teacher preparation structure, based on four years of undergraduate study. Second, there is no logical connection (or research to support such a connection) between an elementary education teacher completing a major in a subject area and that teacher being able to effectively teach three or four *other* subjects.

In moving to at least the option for an interdisciplinary major, the program review committee encourages SDE to consider whether some of the subject area coursework should be in how to teach the particular subject. It is unclear that extensive preparation in a subject area is necessary, but the department's other initiatives (e.g., the beginning educator assessment, content area teacher standards) recognize – and research confirms – the importance of educators knowing how to teach particular subjects.²¹

The program review committee recommends the State Department of Education consider whether the precise or related major requirement should be changed to a moderate content area coursework requirement, leaving in place the subject knowledge test requirement.

A certain level of content knowledge is necessary to adequately teach a subject but it is not clear in the research that major-level knowledge is essential. Furthermore, a certain level of content area knowledge is ensured by requiring teachers to meet the Praxis II exam passing scores. If the Praxis II standard sufficiently ensures teachers have a minimum level of knowledge (as the committee finds later in this chapter), then that Praxis II standard should be adequate. The committee believes the state may have an interest in a second safeguard (in addition to Praxis II) against certifying teachers with inadequate content knowledge, and for that reason is refraining from recommending the department consider the abolition of content area

²⁰ Every Connecticut teacher is required by statute to take a three credit hour course in U.S. history, an area of social studies. As noted previously, a teacher can choose among social studies, natural sciences, and mathematics coursework to meet the general academic coursework requirement, but could opt to leave out any one of these disciplines that the elementary educator will be expected to teach. Accredited higher education institutions require all their students to fulfill math and science requirements, but a student who passes out of the requirement through either high school Advanced Placement scores or a college-specific placement exam does not need to take any additional, college-level coursework. Consequently, a teacher could enter the classroom without having been taught in math or science for four years (since high school).

²¹ For example, see: *Teacher Preparation and Student Achievement*, Don Boyd, Pam Grossman, Hamp Lankford, Susanna Loeb, and Jim Wyckoff, Teacher Pathways Project, August 2008. Accessed October 23, 2008, at: <http://www.teacherpolicyresearch.org/portals/1/pdfs/Teacher%20Preparation%20and%20Student%20Achievement%20August2008.pdf>.

coursework requirements. Moving to a more moderate coursework requirement would both make sense and give teachers and districts more flexibility.²²

Provisional Educator Certificate

The provisional educator certificate is the second-level teaching certificate in the educator certification continuum. This certificate is issued to teachers who meet the initial educator certification requirements (including the coursework requirements described above) and, in addition, have successfully completed the Beginning Educator Support and Training (BEST) program²³ and one year of teaching under the initial educator certificate (or under an interim certificate or a durational shortage area permit). There currently are no education requirements unique to the provisional certificate.

Teachers who successfully teach in a public school or nonpublic school approved by SBE (or another state's education governing body) for at least three years within the 10 years prior to applying for a provisional certificate, also meet state standards for the provisional certificate. The experience must be in the appropriate subject area for the teaching endorsement. Candidates qualifying for a provisional certificate with three years of previous teaching experience are not required to complete a BEST portfolio.

Permanent substitute teachers are eligible for a provisional certificate if they have successfully taught for a school district for one year in the same position in an appropriate subject and grade level. Further, any teacher who teaches less than full time under an initial educator certificate is not required to teach more than two years in order to qualify for a provisional educator certificate. Teachers who obtained their initial certificate after completing a temporary 90-day certificate qualify for a provisional certificate if they teach at least two years under their initial certificate.

Provisional educator certificates are valid for up to eight years before a candidate must qualify for a professional certificate. However, a teacher with an expired provisional certificate who has not fully met the requirements for a professional certificate may be eligible for a provisional certificate, initial certificate, or no certificate at all. Appendix G (Table G-2) shows the conditions under which a certificate is granted when a provisional certificate has expired.

Professional Educator Certificate

The Professional Educator Certificate is the state's highest-level certificate for teachers. Teachers must meet the following requirements to qualify for a professional certificate:

- 1) satisfy the criteria for the provisional certificate;

²² If the department believes a lower coursework requirement is reasonable and should be adopted, C.G.S. Sec. 10-145b(a) would need to be amended.

²³ A full study of the BEST program was conducted by the Program Review Committee under Phase I of the teacher certification study and is available at: <http://www.cga.ct.gov/pri/index.htm>

- 2) complete three years of successful teaching experience in a Connecticut public school or an approved nonpublic school under the provisional certificate (except for out-of-state teachers with National Board certification²⁴); and
- 3) complete 30 semester hours of credit coursework beyond a bachelor's degree (for elementary, middle school, secondary academic, special subjects and fields, and special education certificate endorsements).

The 30 credits of coursework must be completed at an accredited college or university and meet the following requirements:

- directly relate to the subject areas or grade levels of the endorsement, or be in an area(s) related to the teacher's ability to provide instruction effectively or to meet locally determined goals and objectives; or
- be an individual program designed to increase the ability of the teacher to improve student learning as mutually determined or approved by the teacher and the school district (or approved nonpublic school); or
- relate to the subject area or grade level for which the teacher holds an endorsement, and may include coursework completed for obtaining an additional endorsement.²⁵

The coursework may be at either the undergraduate or graduate level, but many Connecticut teachers receive master's degrees. Table I-7 shows that over half of new teachers enter the profession in this state with at least a master's degree, and that a full 91 percent of veteran teachers have reached that level of education. SDE does not collect data on the area of the master's degree (e.g., curriculum and instruction, biology).

Table I-7. Percent of Employed Connecticut Teachers Holding Master's Degrees by Certificate Level: School Year 2007-2008*			
<i>Certificate</i>	<i>Total Teachers</i>	<i>Teachers with at least a Master's Degree</i>	<i>Percent of Teachers with at least a Master's Degree</i>
Initial	5,732	3,026	53%
Provisional	13,240	9,128	69%
Professional	18,697	17,038	91%
Total	37,669	29,192	78%
Total of All Teachers with Certificates, Permits, and Authorizations	38,337	29,477	77%
*This table is based on the data SDE had available. It excludes special education teachers. Source of data: SDE			

²⁴ The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards offers a prestigious credential to veteran teachers who successfully complete a rigorous and lengthy application process.

²⁵ C.G.S. Sec. 10-145b(j)

Proposed changes. SDE's proposal calls for the 30 credits to be completed at the graduate level. The department noted that it is not recommending a master's degree related to the teaching area for two reasons. First, research is mixed on whether a master's degree positively impacts student achievement. Second, the department believes related advanced, non-master's degrees might be helpful (e.g., a law degree for a secondary social studies teacher). The department is also proposing that a teacher who begins Connecticut teacher certification with a master's degree be required to complete some continuing education credits (discussed below) to receive a professional certificate.

Other states. Only a few Northeastern states require coursework beyond a bachelor's degree for certification. Teachers in New York and Massachusetts must obtain a master's degree to move to the second (and highest) level of certification.²⁶ Massachusetts teachers who obtained a master's degree before becoming certified must complete additional study from among a range of options. Teachers in New Hampshire do not have to earn a master's degree unless they wish to pursue the optional highest-level certificate.

Research. No research specifically addresses whether 30 credits beyond a bachelor's degree improves student achievement, but some research examines master's degrees. Generally, as SDE has acknowledged, research regarding whether teachers' master's degrees lead to better student outcomes is mixed at best. As with subject major preparation, researchers agree that the body of peer-reviewed research is somewhat small but has not found a consistent relationship between a master's degree – even in the subject being taught – and student achievement. The current research consensus is that a secondary teacher's in-subject master's degree in mathematics or, to a lesser extent, science, might positively affect student performance in those subjects, but there is no such evidence for other levels or fields.²⁷

The program review committee recommends the State Department of Education reconsider requiring the coursework to move to professional certification be at the graduate level. The department also should consider whether 30 credits beyond the bachelor's degree should be required for certification purposes.

Researchers agree that teachers with graduate degrees have not been shown to be more effective at improving student achievement than teachers with just bachelor's degrees, except possibly for secondary mathematics and science. Graduate degrees not only lack a clear connection to improved student achievement but also come at significant expense to educators and those districts that help their teachers pay for advanced study. Furthermore, limiting acceptable coursework to graduate study could dampen teacher supply in shortage areas by making unacceptable for certification purposes undergraduate-level credits completed to obtain

²⁶ In Massachusetts, the master's degree must be either in the field of the endorsement or in education. In New York, the master's degree must meet one of these three options: in the endorsement field, in a different field but with at least 12 credit hours in the endorsement field, or in education if certification was not previously held.

²⁷ See summaries of the research in: "The Effect of Certification and Preparation on Teacher Quality," Donald Boyd, Daniel Goldhaber, Hamilton Lankford, and James Wyckoff, *Future of Children* 17(1), Spring 2007. And: *The Link Between Teacher Quality and Student Outcomes: A Research Synthesis*, Laura Goe, National Comprehensive Center on Teacher Quality, October 2007. And: *Teacher Quality: Understanding the Effects of Teacher Attributes*, Jennifer Rice King, Economic Policy Institute, 2003. For a recent study (which did not find positive effects for a master's degree, even in mathematics), see: "Teachers and Student Achievement in the Chicago Public Schools," Daniel Aaronson, Lisa Barrow, and William Sander, *Journal of Labor Economics* 25(1), 2007.

cross-endorsements. Therefore, teachers should not be required to engage in graduate level education as a requirement for continuing certification.

Educators might benefit from graduate-level study through having more content knowledge or increased contacts with teachers in other school districts. Some researchers assert that graduate-level study has the potential to improve teachers' practices but has not done so thus far because the quality of some education-focused graduate programs is believed to be weak.²⁸ If SDE strongly believes graduate study is necessary to ensure teacher quality for certification purposes, then the department should consider what would comprise an effective graduate program for teachers and issue program approval and teacher requirements accordingly.

The program review committee recommends the State Department of Education seek and use input from Connecticut's education stakeholders in considering whether the recommendations regarding teacher coursework requirements should be adopted.

Maintaining the certificate. In order to continue the professional certificate before expiration, the educator must have completed nine continuing education units (CEUs), equivalent to 90 hours, during each five-year period.²⁹ Any additional CEUs earned during a five-year period may not be applied to a subsequent continuation period.

A CEU is generally defined as an activity that gives the participant new or unique knowledge focusing on improving student learning, and may be acquired in several ways, as described below. Specific types of continuing education also must be completed by teachers in certain subject areas, as highlighted in Table I-8.

Certificate holders who do not teach at all under their professional educator certificate, and who have not completed any of the CEU requirements for renewal, are eligible for another five-year re-issuance of the certificate. All continuing education requirements must be fulfilled during the next five-year cycle. If the teacher neither works under the re-issued certificate nor completes the full nine CEU requirements, another certificate is re-issued. SDE does not count any continuing education units completed by a teacher who does not work at all during a five-year professional certificate cycle toward another certificate cycle.

If a certificate holder works any fraction of the five years during a certificate period and has not fulfilled the continuing education requirement, another certificate may be re-issued for a period of five years less the number of years the person was employed under the previous certificate. For example, if a teacher teaches in a school district for three years under a professional certificate and the certificate expires but the teacher has not fulfilled the CEU requirement, the next professional certificate will be issued for two years (five years for the new certificate less the three years worked under the previous certificate). During those two years, the teacher must obtain the balance of the nine CEUs in order to renew the certificate. (All CEUs acquired during the first certificate period are applied to the next certificate.)

²⁸ "Learning in the Teaching Workforce," Heather C. Hill, *Future of Children* 17(1), Spring 2007. Accessed October 21, 2008, at: http://www.futureofchildren.org/usr_doc/7_06.pdf.

²⁹ Certificate renewals for the adult education subject area require 4.5 CEUs every five years.

Table I-8. Statutory Continuing Education Requirements for Professional Educator Certificate Renewal	
<i>General Subject Area</i>	<i>Continuing Education Requirements*</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Childhood Nursery through Grade 3 	At least 15 hours (1.5 CEUs) of training in the teaching of reading and reading readiness and assessment of reading performance, including methods of teaching language skills necessary for reading, reading comprehension skills, phonics, and the structure of the English language
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elementary 	At least 15 hours (1.5 CEUs) of training in the teaching of reading and reading readiness and assessment of reading performance, including methods of teaching language skills necessary for reading, reading comprehension skills, phonics, and the structure of the English language; and 15 hours (1.5 CEUs) of training in the use of computers in the classroom
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Middle Grades • Secondary Academic 	At least 15 hours (1.5 CEUs) of training in the use of computers in the classroom, unless such employees are able to demonstrate technology competency, in a manner determined by their school district based on statewide standards for teacher competency in the use of technology for instructional purposes in accordance with state law
<p>*As part of the 90 CEU hours required for the professional educator certificate every five years. Source: C.G.S. Sec. 10-145-b(1)(1)</p>	

CEU activities. There are several ways in which an educator may earn CEUs: completing graduate-level coursework, earning National Board certification, participating in professional development or other activities sponsored by a school district, or completing professional development activities held by a provider approved by SDE.

1. Graduate-level coursework. CEU credit is awarded for coursework only at the graduate level. The graduate credits must be within a teacher's current subject area or applicable to a new subject endorsement area. For certification purposes, one semester hour of graduate credit completed at a regionally accredited college or university is equivalent to 1.5 CEUs, making a regular, three credit-hour course worth 4.5 continuing education units.

2. National Board for Professional Teaching Standards certification. The renewal requirements for one five-year period may also be satisfied through the successful completion of National Board certification in the applicable subject area. Teachers receive nine CEUs toward renewal of a professional certificate only upon full completion of the national certification program; no partial credit toward certificate renewal is given during the time a candidate is working on the national certification requirements.

3. *District-provided professional development.* Local and regional school districts are automatically approved by statute as professional development providers. Individual school districts are required by law to offer teachers, at no fee, a minimum of 18 hours (1.8 CEUs) of continuing education opportunities each year.³⁰ Districts, like other professional development providers, must provide reports of those attending professional development activities to SDE upon request. Also, roughly half the districts in Connecticut use software designed by a private company to do the administrative recordkeeping of teachers' continuing education units.

4. *District-awarded CEU equivalents.* CEU equivalents are continuing education credits provided for activities outside of the formal continuing education courses. Examples of activities eligible for CEU equivalents include planned continuing learning experiences related to student learning; service in specific roles, such as presenters/trainers, peer coaches, and facilitators of district learning activities; and a teacher's participation in curriculum development.

Districts are responsible for implementing a process for reviewing and granting CEU equivalents. These activities generally are tied to specific needs of a district. Only the CEU coordinator within a district can give final approval for CEU equivalents.

5. *Approved CEU providers.* CEUs also may be granted by the approximately 300 providers approved by SDE. Only businesses or organizations – not individuals – may be approved as providers. Detailed information on the department's process for overseeing CEU providers (including districts) is found in Chapter III.

Proposed changes. SDE has been discussing two key revisions to the continuing education requirements. First, the amount could rise to 150 hours if included as part of the department's 2009 legislative package. The change would become effective July 1, 2014. Second, teachers would explicitly be allowed to earn the continuing education increase of 60 hours through job-embedded professional development. Job-embedded professional development involves considering activities performed in the regular course of practice, such as serving on a curriculum committee, or activities that are closely tied to classroom teaching. The department has been considering asking SBE to adopt this measure in guidelines, in fall 2009.

There was some indication that the education department was intending to make different initial proposals for discussion at the SBE meeting in early December, but no further information was available as of the program review committee's final approval of this report in December 2008.

In addition to these potential changes, the department's 2009 legislative proposals likely will include taking continuing education and professional development requirements (other than hours required) out of statute and moving them to SBE guidelines.³¹ The transfer would make

³⁰ This requirement means that, over a five-year period, a teacher in any district will have had the opportunity to obtain nine CEUs through district-provided professional development. Over a five-year period, districts also are required to offer the specific CEUs necessary for teachers at the different levels.

³¹ Districts are required by statute to provide instruction – called in-service training – annually to all their teachers in a variety of health and education topics (e.g., drugs, conflict resolution, literacy readiness, and second language acquisition). Districts are also encouraged to include in professional development several historical and social awareness topics (e.g., Holocaust, Irish famine, Puerto Rican history, personal financial management). (C.G.S. Sec. 10-220a(a)).

the continuing education and professional development guidelines easier to change in response to new federal or legal requirements, or emerging research, according to SDE.

Other states. The amount of continuing education required by Northeastern states varies from 18 to 20 hours per year in Connecticut, Maine, and Vermont, to 30 to 35 hours per year in Massachusetts and New York.³² A few states (Massachusetts and New Hampshire) allow a portion of continuing education to be job-embedded.

Vermont has a unique approach. Teachers are to follow an online workbook that provides guidance on how to engage in meaningful professional development through a written portfolio. The workbook encourages the teacher to explicitly connect professional development with needs of the district and students, as well as with state standards. Job-embedded professional development that involves teaching is strongly encouraged. Each educator's portfolio is evaluated at least once every five years by a volunteer local standards board, which uses the evaluation to renew or discontinue the teacher's certification.

Research. Education researchers agree that most research on continuing education relies on teachers' self-reporting whether an activity improved their knowledge and changed their teaching practices, instead of examining whether student achievement changed.^{33,34} A few researchers have studied small-scale, intensive professional development programs focused on improving teachers' subject-specific instructional methods, and they have found substantial positive impacts on student achievement.^{35,36} The sets of research show the same results, that a professional development activity is effective when it:

- involves many hours;
- focuses on building content knowledge and how to teach content using subject-specific teaching methods and techniques; and
- is aligned with other school, district, and state efforts (e.g., reform efforts, curricula, standards).

³² States' terms of validity for highest-level certificates vary, so comparing the amounts of continuing education on a per-year basis is more useful than simply stating the total amount of continuing education required. Information on Rhode Island's website was conflicting and the department did not respond to several committee staff requests, so none is presented here.

³³ *McREL Insights; Professional Development Analysis*, Ravay Snow-Rennier and Patricia A. Lauer, Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning, 2005. Accessed September 5, 2008, at: http://www.mcrel.org/PDF/ProfessionalDevelopment/50511R_Prof_dvlpmt_analysis.pdf.

³⁴ Much of this research is a series of evaluations of the Eisenhower professional development program, which was a federal program that funded continuing education for math and science teachers. For a frequently cited example, see: "What Makes Professional Development Effective? Results From a National Sample of Teachers," Michael St. Garet, Andrew C. Porter, Laura Desimone, Beatrice F. Birman, and Kwang Suk Yoon, *American Educational Research Journal* 38(2), Winter 2001. Accessed September 5, 2008, at: <http://aztla.asu.edu/ProfDev1.pdf>.

³⁵ "Learning in the Teaching Workforce," Heather C. Hill, *Future of Children* 17(1), Spring 2007. Also: "Teaching Teachers: Professional Development to Improve Student Achievement," American Educational Research Association, *Research Points* 3(1), Summer 2005. Accessed September 5, 2008, at: http://www.aera.net/uploadedFiles/Journals_and_Publications/Research_Points/RPSummer05.pdf.

³⁶ Research of less intensive programs with short duration and few contact hours has shown slight positive or no effects. See: *McREL Insights; Professional Development Analysis*, Ravay Snow-Rennier and Patricia A. Lauer, Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning, 2005.

All these characteristics must be present for the professional development activity to be effective. An activity that requires much time but is neither focused on subject-specific teaching nor aligned with other efforts most likely will not be very effective.

The education community in Connecticut agrees that *the purpose of a certification continuing education requirement is to ensure teachers are continually improving their practice and thereby also improving student learning.*³⁷ Neither SDE nor any other groups have comprehensively evaluated whether this purpose is being met by studying either teachers' assessments of the professional development they receive or post-activity student achievement data.

Despite a paucity of evidence on quality, interviews conducted during this study revealed *there seems to be broad consensus among education constituencies in Connecticut – including many within SDE – that continuing education currently is not effective in some districts.* The widely perceived inadequacy of some continuing education was recognized by the draft recommendations of the 2006 Educator Continuum Sub-Committee on Teacher Evaluation and Ongoing Professional Development. The sub-committee called on SDE to develop standards for high-quality professional development and give technical assistance to districts to help them implement continuing education adhering to those standards.

To assess whether teachers believe continuing education is valuable, the program review committee's survey of currently certified educators included some questions on the quality of professional development. The responses of educators who had received a continuation of the professional certificate are most relevant and presented below, since this group was required to complete professional development for continuing education unit (CEU) credit, but the responses of all the other educators were similar. Most (77 percent) educators who renewed a professional certificate acquired all or the majority of their CEUs in-district. Overall, their perception of district continuing education was mixed. A little more than a quarter (27 percent) of these veteran educators indicated in-district professional development had not improved their teaching. Nearly half (47 percent) believed their district had met their professional needs only "sometimes."

Out-of-district professional development was viewed by respondents as more useful. Only five percent of veteran educators indicated out-of-district continuing education had not improved their teaching. Although in-district continuing education is more popular, many educators – 60 percent of survey respondents – reported taking advantage of out-of-district continuing education.

The education department believes the shift to encouraging teachers to complete job-embedded continuing education will result in more effective professional growth, and education constituencies generally agree. Job-embedded continuing education, appropriately implemented, would likely be more effective than traditional continuing education, according to the literature, because it would involve more hours and be closely focused on improving teaching and student learning in the content area. *One recent, frequently discussed proposal, however,*

³⁷ SDE's 1999 document *Connecticut's Commitment to Continuous Improvement* states, "The intent behind the statutory requirement for CEUs is to ensure that educators are provided with high quality, rigorous professional development experiences linked to advancing student learning" (p. 62).

limits optional job-embedded professional development to one-third of all continuing education hours; the majority (at least 90 hours) would still be obtained from traditional professional development activities.

SDE's rationale for the potential proposal of increasing the total amount of continuing education hours to 150 is based largely on other states' requirements. There is no research indicating an increase solely in total hours spent on all professional development will improve effectiveness. Moreover, there is not consensus on this issue among stakeholders who will be affected by the change. Even so, the proposed quantity standard would equate to one hour of job-embedded professional development for each month – far short of the time research shows is needed to impact teaching.³⁸ Increasing the quantity of continuing education would be of little use because quality is perceived to need considerable improvement in many districts.

The program review committee recommends C.G.S. Sec. 10-145b(l)(1) be amended to require each teacher holding the state's highest-level certification shows the teacher has engaged in meaningful professional development over the duration of the highest-level certificate. The teacher must demonstrate, in a format and in accordance with standards and guidelines developed by the State Department of Education, that each professional development effort was: 1) substantial in duration; 2) connected to student learning and teaching in a subject for which the teacher holds or is pursuing an endorsement; 3) involving the teacher applying in the classroom what was learned; and 4) aligned with state teaching standards and the needs of the teacher's district and students.

The State Department of Education should develop a list of activities that are acceptable forms of professional development. Such activities must first be connected to improving teaching or, secondarily, obtaining a cross-endorsement. At minimum, the list should include the following activities (in no particular order):

- 1) formally mentoring one or more beginning teachers;**
- 2) participating in or leading district or school level committees, initiatives, or seminars on any of the following topics: a) developing and/or teaching a new curriculum; b) assessing students (including development of assessments) and using assessment data to adjust instruction; c) differentiating instruction for diverse learners; and d) obtaining school accreditation;**
- 3) completing coursework to obtain a cross-endorsement;**
- 4) completing a research project that is focused on improving student learning;**
- 5) serving as a teacher-in-residence at the State Department of Education; and**
- 6) working on obtaining certification by the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards.**

³⁸ See: "Learning in the Teaching Workforce," Heather C. Hill, *Future of Children* 17(1), Spring 2007. Also: "Teaching Teachers: Professional Development to Improve Student Achievement," American Educational Research Association, *Research Points* 3(1), Summer 2005.

The current continuing education structure for maintaining state teacher certification is in need of revamping. The system is perceived by many as failing to meet its current purpose of improving teaching, and lacks guidelines or structures encouraging teachers to focus on improving teaching and, ultimately, student learning. CEUs are perceived as a requirement that teachers spend a certain number of hours attending continuing education, without any progress towards improving the quality of their teaching. If the main purpose of continuing education is to advance teaching skills and apply those skills to the classroom, Connecticut's requirements need to be more focused on improving teacher quality, which this recommendation proposes. At the same time, the recommendation provides teachers with a range of concrete, appropriate options to fulfill their professional development requirements for certification. Many of these options already are allowed under current SDE guidelines but seem to be infrequently used.³⁹

The recommended structure incorporates a shift from “continuing education” to “professional development” with the overarching goal of improving teacher quality and student achievement. The criterion for obtaining re-certification will change from having *attended* continuing education for a required number of hours, to having *engaged* in efforts to develop and improve one's overall professional abilities as a teacher. This recommendation also is consistent with the current paradigm shift in education, from one that focuses on what is put *into* the education process to one that emphasizes what is *produced from* that process.

The program review committee recommends the State Department of Education, as part of its forthcoming initiative to produce new teacher evaluation standards, require a teacher's professional development efforts be discussed and considered as part of the district's teacher evaluation process.

This recommendation cements the link between professional development and teacher, student, and district needs. The department is in the process of establishing an initiative that would produce new teacher evaluation standards. This initiative provides the proper forum to integrate and incorporate teachers' professional development efforts into district teacher evaluation processes.

Missing from the above set of recommendations is an appropriate oversight mechanism for SDE to use to ensure teachers are fulfilling their professional development requirements for certification purposes. The committee believes such a mechanism needs very careful thought, consideration, and discussion, including input from the various constituencies impacted by the new professional development requirements, before being implemented. In addition, such an oversight structure is an administrative process rather than one defined in statute.

The program review committee recommends prior to adoption of the new professional development requirements, the State Department of Education – as part of its current stakeholders committee process – begin discussing the framework of a proper oversight and approval mechanism for the new professional development system for teachers. The department should use the framework to fully develop its administrative structure for a professional development oversight and approval process.

³⁹Connecticut's Commitment to Continuous Improvement, SDE, 1999. Accessed October 30, 2008, at: <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/PDF/EducatorStandards/commit.pdf>.

There is a lot at stake in making sure an appropriate, uniform, and fair oversight system for professional development is designed and implemented. A collaborative process between the department and the pertinent stakeholders is the most realistic format for achieving a workable solution and developing such a system.

CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS: ASSESSMENT

An educator must meet Connecticut's minimum test standards to be fully certified as a teacher or administrator in this state. Each assessment's standard is set by the State Board of Education with input from a panel of Connecticut teachers and preparation program faculty who have expertise in the assessment's content area. The panel of educators recommends a passing score to the board, based on a standardized process required and guided by the testing company.⁴⁰ The process involves panelists' evaluations of how important each item on the test is to the job of a beginning teacher and about how many just-sufficient beginning teachers would know the correct answer.

This section focuses on the Praxis basic skills assessment (Praxis I) and content area knowledge tests (Praxis II). Endorsements in most subject areas require one or more Praxis II assessments, except those in foreign languages require the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages tests. The professional knowledge assessment (currently the BEST portfolio), which must be passed to obtain the provisional certificate, was covered in depth during Phase I of the teacher certification study. The Praxis and foreign language tests will become the only assessments uniformly required of Connecticut teachers (outside those determined by teacher preparation programs) if a task force currently examining how the beginning educator requirements should change, recommends the discontinuance of a professional knowledge assessment.

Background

The 1986 Educational Enhancement Act set in place requirements that educators must pass tests in three areas – basic skills, content area (i.e., subject) knowledge, and professional knowledge – to obtain or maintain certification.⁴¹ For each area, the State Department of Education determined whether there were any existing national assessments. The Educational Testing Service had developed Praxis tests: Praxis I for basic skills and Praxis II for most content areas. For each content area that had one or more assessments, the department convened a panel of educators from that content area to evaluate the appropriateness of and proper standard for the test. Multiple Praxis II tests became required for subjects in which the State Board of Education supported the panel's determinations that each of the tests covered distinct and important areas.

When neither the Praxis tests nor any other existing assessments were found appropriate by the panels in basic skills and elementary education, the education department contracted with

⁴⁰ All of Connecticut's current licensing tests are developed by Educational Testing Service. The State Board recently adopted a reading instruction test for elementary education teachers; that test is administered by Pearson, another major testing company. ETS and Pearson use the same standards-setting process.

⁴¹ The testing requirements are mandated by C.G.S. Sec. 10-145f.

a testing firm to create assessments tailored to this state's needs.⁴² A few other content areas lacked appropriate assessments but had relatively few educators; in these cases, SDE decided to have no test. As national tests for basic skills, elementary education, and some subject areas were updated throughout the 1990s, SDE again convened panels and, when recommended by the panels, moved forward in adopting the tests.

Panel Selection

For every assessment, each state education department convenes a panel of educators from within the state having expertise in the content area to recommend the state's own passing score. Connecticut's education department generally relies on referrals from its staff, and administrators contacted by staff, to recruit standards-setting panelists. Potential panelist names are referred to the SDE specialist in charge of certification test standards-setting⁴³ by the department's curriculum and BEST staff, school and district administrators contacted by curriculum staff, and sometimes other panelists. The nominees fill out a basic application and nearly always are accepted as panelists, according to SDE. If a nominee is not familiar to SDE, his or her supervisor is contacted for a telephone conversation about whether the nominee is well-regarded and has leadership qualities. Department staff notes that nominees may be rejected in an effort to make each panel geographically and ethnically representative of the state's educator population, and some invited panelists are unable to attend due to various reasons. The resulting standards-setting panel comprises 10 to 16 teachers and teacher preparation program faculty selected by SDE; the majority is teachers with three to ten years of experience.⁴⁴

The program review committee recommends the State Department of Education make a stronger effort to draw assessment panelists from the broader education community. The department should consider asking all principals and department chairs to: 1) apply to be panelists; and 2) suggest teachers and colleagues as panel nominees.

The panelists play a critical role in certification by recommending what minimum level of knowledge is expected of newly certified teachers. As such, it is important that the panels be as representative as possible. The program review committee recognizes it is likely SDE has chosen the current process to limit the time required to evaluate nominees. However, expanding the pool of panelists could happen through an effort demanding relatively little time. For example, the department could send an e-mail to all districts, asking them to inform principals and department chairs of an opportunity to submit a brief application to serve on an assessment panel. If many applications were received, perhaps applicants could be randomly chosen for service, with phone calls to supervisors of those selected to confirm fitness. The effort would result in more diverse panels, a goal that SDE staff noted is sometimes difficult to reach.

⁴² The state contracted with National Evaluation Systems (NES), which in April 2006 became part of what is now called Pearson.

⁴³ This person currently spends only a small fraction of work time on standards-setting duties. Much more of the person's time was dedicated to these duties in the 1980s and 1990s, when the tests and standards were first being adopted.

⁴⁴ The testing companies recommend educators with this level of experience because they have found these teachers generally are experienced and familiar with what is currently expected of beginning teachers.

Setting Standards

The committee finds *the certification assessment standards-setting process and criteria used by the panel are appropriate and uniform across states and tests*. Standards-setting is based on the judgments of educators in a way that ensures certification standards are legally defensible and specific to the reasonable expectations of a state's educators.⁴⁵ The process is guided and directly monitored by the testing company, and the standards recommended by the educator panel are approved or revised by the State Board of Education.

The standards-setting panel is trained by SDE and the testing firm. Then, each panelist evaluates every test item regarding: 1) relevance to the content area teacher's job; and 2) what percent of just-sufficient beginning teachers would provide the correct response. The panelists' evaluations are aggregated to determine whether the test and each item were judged to be job-relevant by a strong majority of the panelists, as the state's job-relevance standards must be met for the test and recommended test score to be considered valid. Connecticut's job-relevance standards were the highest among the 49 states and state agencies that used Praxis II assessments in 2004 (the most recent data available). More detailed information on the panel's standard-setting process is found in Appendix H.

Based on the panelists' evaluations, a recommended passing score is computed and submitted to the State Board of Education. The board decides what the final passing score should be, either accepting the recommended passing score or, rarely, choosing to make the passing score higher or lower.⁴⁶

Monitoring

Passing rates. The Praxis passing rates of Connecticut test-takers are informally reviewed annually for year-to-year consistency by SDE staff. A test's passing rate has never meaningfully fluctuated over the course of a year, according to the department. SDE examines the passing rates more thoroughly every five years. When a test has a five-year passing rate below 70 percent, the department convenes a panel of educators to re-evaluate whether that assessment's standard is set at the appropriate level.⁴⁷ The panelists review the test to determine whether it is appropriately structured, up-to-date, and rigorous, and recommend the passing score be adjusted (or not) accordingly. The state board receives the panel's recommendation and makes any necessary adjustments.

Panel reviews of tests due to passing rates have occurred twice since the Praxis tests were adopted in the 1990s. The Praxis II secondary mathematics panel recommended the score be lowered in 2001 due to technical problems with how the original score was set; the recommendation was accepted by the state board. Panels were convened for the Praxis II secondary-level English, mathematics, and general science examinations in 2005. Only the

⁴⁵ The Educational Testing Service document "Understanding Teacher Assessment: Significant Decisions in Testing Litigation," published in 1999 (the most recent litigation summary available), describes how educator certification assessments have been upheld by the judicial system when the assessments have been validated for job relevance and appropriateness to beginning teachers.

⁴⁶ When the board decides to deviate from the recommendation, the passing score is adjusted by the number of points that correspond to the standard error of measurement, a statistical measurement of error.

⁴⁷ The 70 percent threshold for a final passing rate was determined by SDE to be a reasonable level.

general science panel recommended the passing score be lowered (solely for the essay component), due to format and a discrepancy in the passing rate between the essay and multiple choice sections. The board rejected this recommendation and so upheld the existing standard.

The State Department of Education is aware a relatively low passing rate might indicate a problem with the test or the passing score, and takes appropriate steps to address those possibilities. There is another possible cause of low passing rates, however, that should be considered when a panel upholds the test and passing score: inadequate preparation in the subject area or subject-specific pedagogy. Each teacher preparation program's Praxis II passing rates are given annually to both the respective program and SDE, and are considered part of Connecticut's accreditation process. If that data show over several years that certain programs' teacher candidates persistently underperform in one or more particular content areas, then changes should be made to how potential educators are trained to teach those content areas, by those programs.

Currently, SDE will only undertake a one-day site visit to a preparation program when the program's aggregate Praxis II passing rate falls below 80 percent.⁴⁸ This standard inappropriately ignores low pass rates in *particular* content areas. An examination of recent institutional Praxis II passing rates found in Connecticut's most recent Title II report to the U.S. Department of Education, however, does not show that any preparation program's passing rates recently have fallen below 80 percent.⁴⁹ The department noted no program's passing rate has ever been at that low level. For that reason, the committee refrains from offering a recommendation in this area.

Content. *The education department does not consistently monitor whether each basic skills exam (i.e., Praxis I) and content test (i.e., Praxis II) reflects current practice and expectations of beginning teachers.* SDE recommended to the State Board of Education in 2001 that every three years the department convene small panels for this purpose but such monitoring has not occurred, since that year. The Praxis firm, Educational Testing Service, has not updated either the basic skills test or most of the content area tests (the exceptions being business education and family consumer science) since Connecticut adopted them in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

The program review committee recommends the State Department of Education convene small panels of educators every five years to re-evaluate whether the basic skills and content area assessments and assessment standards remain appropriate.

Content field knowledge, teaching techniques, and what is expected of teachers and students evolve over time and are the basis of the state's assessment standards. This recommendation will ensure that state exams and standards remain consistent with current practices and expectations.

⁴⁸ "Title II – State Report 2007 – Connecticut; Low Performing Programs, Section V," U.S. Department of Education. Accessed October 24, 2008 at: <https://title2.ed.gov/Title2DR/LowPerforming.asp>.

⁴⁹ "Title II – State Report 2007 – Connecticut," U.S. Department of Education. Accessed October 24, 2008 at: <https://title2.ed.gov/Title2DR/CompleteReport.asp>.

Implementation

Meeting the state's standards on the Praxis I (basic skills) tests – or receiving a waiver – is a statutory requirement of entry into Connecticut teacher preparation programs and, for out-of-state applicants, Connecticut educator certification (including permits).⁵⁰ Educators can obtain a Praxis I waiver by submitting test scores on widely used standardized assessments that meet the standard set forth in state law.⁵¹

The subject area assessment standard, if one has been set for the endorsement area, must be met by all applicants for full certification, Durational Shortage Area Permits, and 90-day permits issued to recent graduates of Connecticut alternate route programs. About three-fifths of all currently certified teachers have met the subject area assessment standard, as shown by Table I-9 below. Most of the remaining teachers were first certified before the assessment(s) for their areas were phased in and were exempted from the subject knowledge assessment requirement set forth in C.G.S. Sec. 10-145f. (It is likely many of those at the initial and provisional levels were first certified before the subject assessment requirement became effective with the adoption of the tests in the late 1980s and early 1990s, and have not taught a sufficient number of years to advance their certificates. Instead, they have merely renewed their certificates.)

In addition to the subject area tests, all teachers or certification applicants applying for an endorsement in early childhood education or elementary education will need to pass a reading instruction test administered by Pearson, beginning July 1, 2009. The same test is required for these endorsements by Massachusetts.

Table I-9. Percent of Certified Teachers Who Were Required to Have Met Subject Area Assessment Standard (Praxis II or Foreign Language Test): October 2008*

	<i>Certificate Level</i>			
	<i>Initial</i> (n=13,927)	<i>Provisional</i> (n=21,733)	<i>Professional</i> (n=34,677)	<i>All 3 Levels</i> (n=70,337)
Percent of All Certified Teachers, at Certificate Level	20%	31%	49%	100%
Percent of Teachers At Certificate Level, Required to Have Passed Subject Area Assessment	90%	91%	28%	60%
*Excludes certified educators who do not hold at least one teaching endorsement (e.g., school nurses not teaching health class). Those who hold interim certificates are also excluded because interim certificates are issued to educators who have met all certification requirements except one or more subject area tests and/or a certain coursework (e.g., a 36-hour course in special education). Source of data: SDE				

⁵⁰ Passing the Praxis I standard is mandatory for all endorsements that require a bachelor's degree except for school business administrator. In addition, the education commissioner may waive the Praxis I requirement for various trade-related endorsements (R.C.S.A. Sec. 10-145d-405).

⁵¹ State law lists the following tests (and a standard for each) that must be met to obtain a Praxis I waiver: American College Testing (ACT), Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), Graduate Record Exam (GRE), or the Prueba de Aptitude Academica with either English as a Second Language Achievement Test (ESLAT) or the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) (C.G.S. Sec. 10-145f).

Passing rates. The ability of potential educators to meet Connecticut's Praxis I standard has been about the same for the last 14 years. Nearly 90 percent of those who applied for Connecticut certification or took the Praxis I test for entry into an in-state preparation program met the state's basic skills standard, as shown by Table I-10 below. About 40 percent of those meeting the standard received test waivers, and the remainder passed the Praxis I test. Approximately 80 percent of those who needed and attempted to pass Praxis I, did so by their final try. (An educator may choose to take Praxis I once every 60 days as many times as is necessary to pass the test.) The initial and final pass rates for each component of the Praxis I test and for the test as a whole are found in Appendix I.

Table I-10. In-State Teacher Candidates' and Out-of-State Certification Applicants' Ability to Meet Praxis I Standard: 1994-2008			
	<i>June 1994- Dec. 2000</i>	<i>Sept. 2000- Aug. 2005*</i>	<i>Sept. 2005- Aug. 2008</i>
Number of candidates and applicants	25,987	28,254	14,681
Percent of candidates and applicants who received waivers	40%	39%	43%
Percent of candidates and applicants who passed Praxis I on final try, of those who took it	78%	83%	81%
Total number (and percent) of candidates and applicants who met the Praxis I standard through either waiver or Praxis I test results	22,542 (87%)	22,250 (89%)	13,081 (89%)
*There is some overlap (September, November, and December 2000) due to available data. Source of data: SDE			

Subject area assessment passing rates for 1994 through 2008 also are presented in Appendix I. Three conclusions can be drawn about the passing rates, based on the data in the appendix. First, some test-takers improve their performance by taking the test multiple times. The re-test option allows more potential educators to meet the certification standard. Second, there are no consistent trends in passing rates across areas over time. A few subject areas saw their final passing rates increase (business education and elementary education), while other subject area rates declined, fluctuated, or remained the same. Third, the passing rate varies across areas. In the most recent years (September 2005 through August 2008), the rates ranged from not quite 70 percent in general science and middle school science to 95 percent and above in art, elementary education, and special education.

Passing scores compared to other states. Praxis assessment standards vary among states. Although each state follows the same standards-setting process, their educators who set the standards may have different ideas about what type and level of knowledge is important for

beginning teachers – which ultimately are the bases for the passing score. It is also important to note that although nearly all tests have the same scaled score range (100-200), scores should not be compared across tests to determine the relative difficulty of obtaining passing scores.⁵² Connecticut's Praxis passing scores generally are high; the scores and how they compare to states in the region and across the country are found in Appendix J.

Reciprocity. Educators' Praxis and foreign language test results are valid for Connecticut certification, regardless of where the test was taken. Twenty-three states require Praxis I of all educators⁵³ and 31⁵⁴ require Praxis II of educators in certain fields.⁵⁵

Some other states, including New York and Massachusetts, require educators to take state-specific basic skills and subject area tests (not part of the Praxis series) that are not accepted for Connecticut certification. Consequently, educators from those states who apply for Connecticut certification must take a second round of tests (Praxis), and educators from Connecticut who apply for certification in non-Praxis states must take a second round of tests (state-specific).⁵⁶ Nationally, Colorado is the only state that unconditionally accepts any state-specific or Praxis test scores that meet certain standards.

SDE is holding discussions with the Massachusetts education department regarding how to facilitate testing reciprocity. Each state's education department would like the ability to accept the test results of educators who have taken the basic skills and/or subject area assessments required by the other state. Coming to a testing reciprocity agreement involves closely examining each test to determine a score that is equivalent to the state's standard for its preferred test, according to SDE. Despite the substantial time necessary to determine the passing scores, the department believes and the committee concurs that the resulting reciprocity would greatly enhance teacher mobility and therefore could help ease any teacher shortages. SDE also noted it intends to contact New York regarding potential testing reciprocity and Colorado about the testing and logistical issues around accepting all state-specific and Praxis test scores.

The program review committee recommends the State Department of Education continues its efforts in developing testing reciprocity with Massachusetts and New York and periodically report on its progress to the State Board of Education.

⁵² A test could have a relatively high passing score because it has a large portion of items judged to be job relevant and well-known by many sufficient beginning teachers. Such a test could be easier than an assessment with a lower proportion of items judged to be job-relevant and less well-known by just-sufficient beginning teachers.

⁵³ An additional three states accept Praxis I results as one way to meet the basic skills requirement.

⁵⁴ One additional state, Colorado, accepts either Praxis II or state-specific subject tests.

⁵⁵ "State Notes; Teacher Certification and Licensure/Testing Requirements," Angela Baber, Education Commission of the States, January 2008, <http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/77/13/7713.pdf>.

⁵⁶ Massachusetts and New York do not accept Praxis scores, but New Hampshire and Vermont will exempt teacher certificate applicants from testing requirements or accept state-specific test scores when certain experience or testing-area requirements have been met. New Hampshire exempts applicants from other states who have at least seven years' experience teaching under a full certificate, and accepts state-specific (i.e., non-Praxis) test scores. However, if certain areas are not tested by the state-specific test, then that portion of the Praxis test must be taken. Vermont accepts state-specific tests only from educators who have at least three years' experience teaching under a full certificate in another state. Both states require the sending state's passing score to be met. This means that applicants from out-of-state might need to meet a different assessment standard than those from in-state. Maine and Rhode Island did not respond to PRI staff requests for testing reciprocity information and no such information was found on the Internet.

EFFORTS TO CHANGE CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

The certification structure and teaching endorsements have largely remained the same since the state's Education Enhancement Act was passed in 1986. Only minor changes have been made, mainly in response to federal guidance and school districts' concerns regarding shortages. For example, the subject knowledge assessment must now be passed to receive a durational shortage area permit to comply with the highly qualified teacher provision of the No Child Left Behind Act.

One decade ago, an attempt at major certification regulation change was made and later repealed. The key proposal was to move to a system that involved offering two types of certification options at the elementary and secondary levels: content area, and combined content area and special education (i.e., dual certification). Under the proposed system, a prospective teacher who wanted to teach elementary education would have chosen to enroll in either a regular elementary education preparation program, or a combined special education and elementary education program. The change was intended to make special education teachers sufficiently prepared to teach both special education within the subject and a subject in a non-special education classroom, thus the term "dual certification." In addition, for all endorsements, preparation requirements were established for the first time as a set of skills – called "competencies" – that new teachers were to possess upon graduation from their teacher preparation program. Each preparation program's ability to demonstrate whether and how teachers were meeting these competencies was to be judged through the state accreditation process for teacher preparation programs.

The new dual certification and competency regulations were adopted in 1998, but with a delayed effective date of July 1, 2003. The delay was necessary to give teacher preparation programs time to adjust curricula and begin graduating students under the new requirements. Other changes, involving minor adjustments to the requirements for certain permits and teaching endorsements,⁵⁷ were adopted at the same time but became effective immediately.⁵⁸

Just before the dual certification and competency regulations' effective date, implementation was delayed by the General Assembly at the State Board of Education's (SBE) request through P.A. 03-168. The request stemmed from concerns expressed by teacher preparation programs, district administrators, department staff, and other key constituencies regarding the timeframe and impacts of the proposal. The regulations ultimately were repealed through the regulations review process later in 2003.

The State Department of Education has been shaping and attempting to build support for different major changes to the certification structure and endorsement requirements over the last four years. The current set of proposals is more expansive than the one adopted in 1998 and

⁵⁷ The other changes involved credit hour and renewal requirements for a range of permits and teaching authorizations (excluding certificates), and for cross-endorsements and middle grades endorsements. For more information, see "Certification Regulations – Highlights of Changes AUGUST 1998" on SDE's website, at: <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2613&q=321246>.

⁵⁸ These other changes were set to expire in 2003, when the dual certification regulations that incorporated the other changes would have taken effect. Because the dual certification regulations were repealed, the other changes remain in effect.

involves several major components. One main aspect is a move to “integrated certification.” Under the current integrated certification proposal, all elementary and secondary teachers will be prepared to educate all children, including those eligible for special education services, English language learners (ELLs), and students from all socioeconomic backgrounds. The teachers will be allowed to teach in non-special education classrooms and serve as resource room instructors, but will not be lead special education teachers.

Like the earlier, repealed certification regulations, integrated certification would require teacher preparation programs to demonstrate their teacher candidates have met competencies that show sufficient preparation to educate all students. The draft competencies currently under consideration are different from those that were supposed to become effective in 2003. The department believes teacher preparation programs are better equipped to assess candidates’ competencies compared to several years ago because the programs now have gone through state accreditation based on standards that require assessment.

If the integrated certification proposal is adopted, SDE will examine existing subject matter tests to see whether any cover the knowledge that will be incorporated into an integrated certificate. Should the search be unsuccessful, the department is committed to developing a suitable assessment or finding a way to incorporate the new material into existing tests.

Other significant changes being considered are making the special education certificate require previous experience and certification in a content area, and increasing continuing education requirements. The rationales for these changes are discussed later.

At the same time SDE is undertaking this effort, a task force mandated by public act is meeting to consider what, if anything, should be given to and required of new teachers in terms of support and assessment after the current beginning teacher program ends on July 1, 2009 (P.A. 08-107). The task force is taking a comprehensive view and may make recommendations that impact the certification structure for veteran teachers as well. The group’s report is due to the General Assembly in January 2009.

Current Certification Proposals

According to SDE, the integrated certification and special educator proposals, the department’s main two changes to teacher certification regulations, are being driven by federal laws, the education community’s research, and changes in Connecticut’s classrooms. These three forces converge in the expectation that educators need to be more broadly prepared to effectively teach all students. The department is proposing to ensure teachers acquire the skills to do so through revisions to certification requirements.

Integrated certification. The integrated certification proposal “integrates” instruction on how to teach diverse learners into teacher preparation program curricula. Integrated certification will apply to teachers of core and special subjects (e.g., art) at the early childhood (pre-kindergarten through grade 3), elementary (grades K-6), and secondary (grades 6-12) levels. The federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 and the reauthorization three years later of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) encouraged states to move more aggressively toward ensuring all teachers have the skills necessary to educate all children.

NCLB explicitly requires states, districts, and schools to focus on improving the achievement test performance of students of every ability and background. The law's imperative coincides with increasing ethnic, linguistic, and economic diversity in Connecticut's schools.

IDEA has long required schools to place students with disabilities in the "least restrictive environment." The least restrictive environment means a special education student should be placed in a general education classroom as opposed to a special education classroom, or receive pull-out instruction as opposed to a special education school, whenever possible. SDE believes that to effectively teach students under this policy of inclusion, general educators need to be equipped to teach a broad variety of learners. Inclusion of students with disabilities in general education classrooms is further promoted by the Connecticut State Board of Education's 2002 settlement of the *P.J. et al* lawsuit.⁵⁹ According to SDE, about 12 percent of all Connecticut students receive special education services.

In Connecticut, about three-quarters of children eligible for special education services spent at least 80 percent of their school day within a general education classroom in the 2007-08 school year. An additional 18 percent spent between 40 and 79 percent of their day within the general education classroom.⁶⁰ Clearly, *general education teachers are expected to instruct special education students*. Despite the move to inclusion, national experts and practitioners appear to agree that the current system of educating special education students does not appear to be working.⁶¹

Scientific Research-Based Interventions (SRBI). Federal and state trends encouraged the State Department of Education to undertake a systemic reform of how instruction is delivered, called Scientific Research-Based Interventions (SRBI), of which the integrated certification proposal is a key element. Specifically, under IDEA, states must at least permit but may require the use of a process based on a student's response to scientific research-based interventions, and may permit the use of other alternative research-based procedures for determining whether a child has a specific learning disability.

The SRBI approach ties together foundational teaching principles that have been promoted by the education department in numerous ways over several years. SRBI is Connecticut's version of Response to Intervention, a federally accepted technique to enhance instruction for students who are struggling.

⁵⁹ A group of five children with mental disabilities and their families sued the State Board of Education in 1991 in a class-action lawsuit. The 2002 settlement requires the State Department of Education to annually show progress toward reaching five goals for students with mental retardation and intellectual disabilities: more inclusion, less over-identification of children in certain groups (race, ethnicity, gender, or district) as eligible for special education services, increase in attendance at non-special education schools, more time spent in a regular classroom, and a higher percent participating in extracurricular activities. The settlement agreement is available on SDE's website at: http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/PDF/deps/PJ/SA_PJ_Final02.pdf.

⁶⁰ PRI staff calculations using: "K-12 Students in Regular Class, Resource Room, and Separate Classroom Settings by Disability Type," SDE, Handout distributed to Certification Advisory Committee on Regulations Revisions, September 25, 2008.

⁶¹ *Response to Intervention; Policy Considerations and Implementation*, National Association of State Directors of Special Education, Inc., 2005.

The education department believes the research indicates that SRBI, if implemented properly, will improve student achievement – particularly for children in minority groups – and substantially lessen (but not eliminate) the need for traditional special education services by focusing on early intervention. The National Association of State Directors of Special Education also believes early detection and intervention will enable teachers to provide assistance when students begin to struggle, instead of evaluating students for special education services when they fall far behind.⁶²

SRBI is a three-tier approach to instruction aimed at delivering appropriate instruction, discovering learning trouble early, and subsequently providing additional assistance before the student is placed into special education. It involves administering frequent assessments (common to all classes in a grade level and subject at a school) to understand every student's progress and then using research-based instructional methods.

Under SRBI, all students are to receive high-quality instruction suitable to their needs (i.e., differentiated). A student who is making little or no progress at one level, moves to the next tier to receive as a supplement more intensive support, more frequent assessments, and different research-based instructional techniques. If a student has moved through the second and third levels, spending eight to 20 weeks in each, but continues to show no substantial improvement, a referral to a special education services assessment may be given.⁶³ (Parents continue to have the option of requesting a special education assessment whenever desired.)

Teachers prepared under the proposed integrated certificate requirements would have learned during their preparation programs how to provide differentiated, research-based instruction to all students, which is a foundational component of SRBI. Therefore, *if the integrated certification proposal is effectively implemented, new teachers will be sufficiently equipped to implement SRBI instruction.*

The department issued guidelines in spring 2008 to require districts use SRBI as part of the assessment that determines whether a student should receive special education services by September 2009. It is unclear to what extent Connecticut schools have moved to adopt SRBI, aside from an SDE grant project in four districts aiming to expand use of the approach, and the department has not determined whether compliance with the new SRBI requirement will be monitored.

SRBI was developed by an advisory panel, appointed by the education department, which relied extensively on a Response to Intervention report written by the National Association of State Directors of Special Education.⁶⁴ Further, the upcoming IDEA reauthorization, due in 2009, might require states to mandate the use of such an approach, as Connecticut has moved to do.

⁶² *Response to Intervention; Policy Considerations and Implementation*, National Association of State Directors of Special Education, Inc., 2005.

⁶³ *Connecticut's Framework for RTI - Using Scientific Research-Based Interventions: Improving Education for All Students*, SDE, August 2008. Accessed October 22, 2008, at: http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/pressroom/SRBI_full.pdf.

⁶⁴ *Response to Intervention; Policy Considerations and Implementation*, National Association of State Directors of Special Education, Inc., 2005.

Highly qualified special educators. The department's other main proposal that has implications for special education is to make the main special educator endorsement an advanced one. The advanced special educator would be required to have certification and previous experience in teaching a subject area, as well as a master's degree in special education.⁶⁵

SDE has stated that the advanced special educator proposal has been put forth because NCLB requires special educators to have content area expertise when they are primary instructors. "Primary" instructor means the special education teacher is the main source of instruction and is not merely supplementing the teaching of the student by a general education teacher. For example, a special education teacher who is the sole deliverer of math instruction to one or more special education students is the primary math instructor for those students. In contrast, a special education teacher who provides supplemental supportive instruction to one or more special education students in a resource room setting, in addition to instruction provided to those students in a general education classroom by a general education teacher, is not the primary instructor. Special education instructors who are not primary instructors are required under NCLB to be highly qualified only in special education, a qualification that in Connecticut is met by passing the Praxis II examination in special education and meeting the special educator endorsement requirements.

It is not fully clear to what extent Connecticut's current special education teachers are now primary instructors (or would become them, under SRBI) and therefore are required by federal law to have expertise in the content area(s) of primary instruction. A survey conducted by SDE in fall 2005 indicated that about 30 percent of special education teachers at the elementary level and 20 percent at the high school level provided content instruction.⁶⁶ The department has noted a future reauthorization of NCLB might require special educators who are secondary instructors to be highly qualified in the subjects they teach.

Schedule

The State Department of Education has set a schedule for advancing the certification changes, described in Table I-11 below. The changes will move forward in two components. Statutory changes, which involve mostly continuing education requirements and certificate denials and revocations, will be part of SDE's legislative package for the 2009 session of the General Assembly, if approved by the State Board of Education and the Office of Policy and Management. Proposed regulatory changes, which involve the certification endorsement requirements, will be formally presented to SBE in fall 2009. (The board has been informally briefed on the proposals for a few years; this fall, SDE began a series of in-depth presentations and discussions with the board.) The regulatory changes, which are still being determined, would not become fully effective until summer 2014 because of the length of time necessary for two key components to happen. First, the state's administrative process required to adopt regulations must be followed and takes some time. Second, full implementation would require teacher preparation programs to modify curricula, be re-accredited by the state, and then graduate entering teacher candidates with the new preparation. The education department has

⁶⁵ There have been varying proposals regarding what certification should be granted to special educators coming to Connecticut from other states. As these proposals seem to be in flux, they are not discussed in this report.

⁶⁶ "Survey of Assignments of Special Educators Teaching Core Academic Subjects; Survey Conducted Fall 2005," SDE.

expressed its commitment to keeping the self-imposed current schedule because it believes the changes are necessary to improve student achievement, and therefore wants the new requirements to take effect as quickly as possible.

Development Process

The State Department of Education appears to have made a more proactive effort to receive input from education constituencies, compared to the last time major certification revisions were considered. Information from interviews conducted for this study indicates that during the 1990s, SDE did not fully seek the opinions of outside groups. The department seemed to have relied mainly on its own curriculum and certification staff to shape the competency-based certification changes, which ultimately were repealed. In contrast, *in this round of developing certification changes, SDE has reached out to education constituencies and been receptive to conversations when approached by them.*

The education department's certification unit began examining potential changes through internal and external methods in fall 2005. These early meetings with education constituencies did not result in either well-formed, thorough drafts of changes or stable consensus on the ideas, but they provided SDE with input used to further refine the proposals.

Internally, SDE's curriculum unit recommended what qualification changes, if any, should be made in their respective content areas. The curriculum staff was given several months to receive input from all relevant content area associations, develop proposals, and justify the proposals to certification unit staff. The certification unit then considered the implications of the proposals, examining whether each would be overly burdensome on preparation programs and potential teachers, result in teacher supply problems for school districts, or pose a barrier to certifying educators from other states.

Table I-11. SDE's Proposed Timeline for Adopting New Certification Laws and Regulations (as of September 2008)	
Nov./Dec. 2008	Presentation of proposed statutory amendments to State Board of Education (SBE). Amendments could include changes to continuing education and certain aspects of certificate denials and revocations.
Sept. 2009	Presentation of intent to adopt regulations to SBE. New regulations will include changes to endorsements, including integrated certification and special educator endorsements.
Fall 2009	Public comment period on proposed regulations
Feb. 2010	Adoption of new regulations by SBE
Spring 2010	Approval of revised preparation programs, now aligned with new regulations
Jan. 2011	Projected filing of regulations with Secretary of the State, after approval by the Legislative Regulation Review Committee and the Attorney General
July 1, 2014	Full implementation of new endorsement regulations, with issuance of certificates to educators who were prepared in the revised preparation programs
Source of data: "CSDE Certification Advisory Committee on Regulations Revision; September 25, 2008; Overview Presentation"	

Externally, the department undertook three key efforts. First, it convened an initial round of stakeholder meetings. Those meetings focused on integrated certification but included a range of topics. Second, soon after the stakeholders started to meet, the department began in January 2006 an overall examination of Connecticut's educator requirements and standards, called the Educator Continuum Steering Committee. The continuum committee involved a broad range of education and business groups and individuals. One sub-committee focused on teacher certification proposals. Third, simultaneously several separate groups met (usually only a few times) to discuss particular endorsement areas (e.g., special education, math, bilingual education). The three efforts ended mid-2006. The department's certification proposals that had been discussed were included in a list of ten "draft" recommendations originating from the continuum committee that SDE presented to the State Board of Education as priorities.

The department then experienced several high-level personnel changes, which slowed the development process, with one exception. In the first half of 2007, the department brought together teacher preparation program leaders and district and school administrators to develop a draft of the competencies prospective teachers would be expected to have upon completing preparation. Of note, the teachers' unions were invited to participate and did so but were dissatisfied with both their level of input and the last version of the draft competencies reviewed by the group. The draft competencies, which still have not been finalized, were drawn, in part, from national and state professional association teacher standards.

In early 2008, the department began a series of additional efforts that included obtaining the opinions of teachers, administrators, and other educators who would be affected by any certification changes. Some of these efforts were in response to being approached by groups that were dissatisfied with their current level of input with respect to the proposal development process, including a series of meetings with teacher preparation programs and the 2007 group that drafted the teacher preparation competencies. Other efforts at collecting feedback were initiated by the department, including focus groups with educators and parents of special education students, a second round of stakeholder meetings (happening late 2008), and colloquia with teacher preparation programs. These key proposal development activities are described in more detail in Table I-12.

Table I-12. Timeline of SDE Efforts to Date to Develop New Certification Requirements			
<i>Date Began</i>	<i>Date Ended</i>	<i>Effort</i>	<i>Description of Effort</i>
Fall 2005	March 2006	Internal generation of certification endorsement requirements	SDE curriculum consultants asked content area associations for input and gave recommendations on how certification endorsement requirements should be changed, if at all
Nov. 2005	June 2006	First set of stakeholder meetings	Meetings held with constituency groups regarding integrated certification

<i>Date Began</i>	<i>Date Ended</i>	<i>Effort</i>	<i>Description of Effort</i>
Jan. 2006	June 2006	Educator Continuum Committee	Examined potential certification proposals as part of larger examination of educator requirements
Mar. 2006	Summer 2006	Refinement of internally generated endorsement proposals	Certification and curriculum units met to clarify proposals, and certification unit examined each proposal's feasibility
Fall 2006	Summer 2007	Consortium on Teacher Competencies	Constituency groups approached SDE to ask for more involvement; end product of meetings was draft pre-service competencies (i.e., skills teachers would be required to demonstrate upon completion from teacher preparation programs)
Spring 2007	N/A	Presentation on key aspects of proposals to SBE	First time State Board of Education received proposed changes
Feb. and Mar. 2008	N/A	Focus groups of educators and parents	Regional education lab led focus groups of teachers, principals, superintendents, parents, and education advocates regarding the proposals, at SDE's request
Spring 2008	Summer 2008	Meetings with teacher preparation program directors	Preparation program directors approached SDE, and met with the Education Commissioner and certification staff; reached near-consensus at director level on basic preparation model (integrated certification and competency-based)
Summer 2008	N/A	Meetings with curriculum consultants	Met with curriculum consultants whose areas were under major overhauls (e.g., elementary education, literacy) to get feedback on current versions of proposals
Sept. 2008	Dec. 2008	Second set of stakeholder mtgs.	Meeting with constituency groups regarding all certification changes
Sept. 2008	Dec. 2008	Teacher preparation program colloquia	Meetings with preparation program leaders and faculty to discuss primarily integrated certification and special education endorsements
Winter 2008	Unclear	Committee reviews of teacher standards and teacher evaluation requirements	Committees not yet formed; will integrate the proposed teacher competencies into Connecticut's teaching standards and otherwise revise as necessary, and produce new teacher evaluation standards
Source: Based on PRI staff interviews and reviews of meeting documents			

Although some of SDE's efforts to gather information were the result of requests from outside groups, when approached, the department has been willing to meet with and hear the concerns of others, as indicated by Table I-12. Some groups, most notably the teachers' unions, disagree with certain key aspects of the proposals. The groups have been able to voice their concerns through several of the initiatives outlined in the table. In some cases, the department has adjusted its proposals in response to concerns raised. Examples of adjustments to date are:

- pushing back its full implementation date from 2012 to 2014, due to the teacher preparation programs' concern about the time it will take to adequately revise curricula;
- moving to competency-based requirements that can be satisfied by embedding key preparation in coursework, from the department's original 2005 proposal to require 15 credits in differentiating instruction for diverse learners, a change made in response to concerns expressed by teacher preparation programs; and
- creating a non-advanced special educator endorsement (the details are still in development, as noted previously), to ease concerns among stakeholders with the advanced special educator endorsement and to make Connecticut special education certification possible for teachers trained or experienced in other states.

At the same time, the committee believes the education department needs to work to limit opposition to or revise proposals with which many education constituencies disagree. This is especially true of proposals for which the legal, research, and common-sense foundation is relatively weak. For example, in one stakeholder meeting observed by committee staff, the group reached near-consensus against the department's proposal to increase the continuing education requirements. The department, however, did not at the meeting either commit to reconsidering that proposal or indicate in any other way that the proposal would be revised. Input such as that should be recognized and used by the department.

For a proposal that the department believes needs to be implemented largely as is currently conceived, yet is yielding concern or disagreement among stakeholders, SDE should consider whether more effort should be made to inform the education community – including members of advocacy groups – of the proposal's rationale, details, and implications. The program review committee recognizes SDE wants the changes implemented as quickly as possible, but without proactive and continued work to ease concerns, the department likely will encounter implementation difficulties or, at a minimum, animosity that may affect other efforts requiring cooperation within the larger education community. While complete consensus may be an unreachable goal, efforts should be made to develop as much support as possible.

The program review committee recommends the State Department of Education continue to involve all pertinent stakeholders as changes in regulations are put forth, allow more discourse for understanding to be reached when there is disagreement over a particular proposal, and adjust its certification proposals when necessary to advance the state's educational goals, including improved student achievement.

Connecticut Teacher Certification Requirements and Student Achievement

The committee was interested in reviewing whether the state's certification requirements contribute to the achievement gap in Connecticut. The achievement gap can generally be described as "the persistent and significant disparity between the academic achievement of low income and minority children and their white, middle class peers."⁶⁷

No studies were found focusing solely on Connecticut's certification requirements and student achievement in this state's public schools. Interviews conducted as part of this study further confirmed that any connection between student achievement and Connecticut's certification requirements has not been a specific topic of research within the state. As such, the committee looked to external research and relied on findings in the national literature examining the possible connection between state teacher standards and student achievement.

It is documented in the national literature that numerous factors influence student achievement beyond solely state teacher certification standards. Research regarding the effect of state certification on student achievement has been mixed, with many studies failing to employ a rigorous, comprehensive evaluation methodology. There is some research that examines whether distinct teacher qualifications that states can choose to adopt as certification requirements, impact student achievement. As noted earlier in this chapter, the literature has not shown that certain teacher qualifications (subject major and master's degree) generally are useful in improving student achievement. At the same time, there is broad consensus that quality teachers are the critical component to student achievement.

In looking at the question of any impact on the state's achievement gap by Connecticut's certification requirements, certain information was developed:

- 1) the extent of the achievement gap in Connecticut in comparison with other states;
- 2) the state's current initiatives to address the issue of low student achievement within schools; and
- 3) what, if any, certification differences exist for teachers between this state and surrounding states with higher student achievement than Connecticut.

(Information regarding the certification requirements used in surrounding states was provided earlier in this chapter and outlined in Appendix F.)

Extent of Achievement Gap in Connecticut

Connecticut has the most pronounced achievement gap in the country. The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), overseen by the U.S. Department of Education and often referred to as "the nation's report card," is a commonly used resource to measure Connecticut's achievement gap and compare Connecticut to other states.⁶⁸ NAEP assessments

⁶⁷ See: ConnCAN, Issue Brief, Number 1, July 2006.

⁶⁸ See: <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/about/>. Last accessed on December 4, 2008.

are conducted periodically in mathematics, reading, science, writing, the arts, civics, economics, geography, and U.S. history.

Appendix K provides 2007 NAEP results for reading and math achievement for students in fourth and eighth grades. Reading and math are the key assessments reported by NAEP, and the achievement gap information is presented for those students and topics. The appendix provides information for poor and non-poor students based on the variable “free and reduced-price lunches (subsidized through the federal government)” as a measurement of income level. The appendix also provides NAEP assessment results based on race and ethnicity.

As Appendix K shows, Connecticut ranked last (i.e., had the largest gap) in 2007 among the 50 states and the District of Columbia when examining the difference between NAEP assessment scores for poor and non-poor students in reading and math at the fourth and eighth grade levels. Connecticut ranked near the bottom when examining the achievement gap in terms of race.

State Certification and the Achievement Gap

As discussed in detail above, Connecticut is currently in the process of redesigning its certification standards for teachers primarily with the focus to improve learning for all children. Some education reformers recommend higher state certification standards as the key measure for teacher quality, and thus student achievement. At the same time, others believe state certification requirements cannot adequately define or promote quality, and that rigorous certification requirements may negatively impact the state’s ability to attract and meet the demand for teachers, or even deter quality educators from teaching.

As referenced earlier, however, there is limited and mixed national research that examines the relationship between different aspects of certification and student achievement.⁶⁹ Several syntheses of studies and evaluations conducted throughout the country as a way to understand what researchers have concluded about certification requirements and student achievement were reviewed.⁷⁰ The following provides a general summary of research findings for several attributes commonly used by states, including Connecticut, to initially evaluate prospective teachers:

- *Verbal ability*: Research shows a strong relationship between a teacher’s verbal ability, as determined through formal measures of aptitude (e.g., academic performance, standardized tests), and student achievement. Measures of a teacher’s verbal ability through academic proficiency are

⁶⁹ Some studies include: “The Effect of Certification and Preparation on Teacher Quality,” Donald Boyd, Daniel Goldhaber, Hamilton Lankford, and James Wyckoff, *Future of Children* 17(1), Spring 2007; “Does Teacher Certification Matter,” Daniel Goldhaber and Dominic Brewer, *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, Summer 2000, Volume 22, No. 2.

⁷⁰ See “The Link Between Teacher Quality and Student Outcomes: A Research Synthesis,” Laura Goe, *National Comprehensive Center on Teacher Quality*, October 2007. “Eight Questions on Teacher Licensure and Certification: What Does the Research Say?” *Education Commission on the States*, December 2005. “Teacher Quality: Understanding the Effectiveness of Teacher Attributes,” Jennifer K. Rice, *Economic Policy Institute*, 2003. “Indicators of Teacher Quality,” Daniel Goldhaber and Emily Anthony, *Educational Resources Information Center, U.S. Department of Education*, July 2003.

important indicators of teacher quality and effectiveness, particularly for the achievement of at-risk students.

- *Experience:* The consensus is that teaching experience, particularly after the first few years of teaching, benefits student achievement. Teacher effectiveness based on experience tends to plateau, and there is no evidence that effectiveness increases with experience after the first five years of teaching. Experience may be more important for high school teachers than for teachers in lower grades.
- *Preparation:* There is some limited evidence showing a link between the selectiveness of a teacher's preparation program and student achievement. Knowledge of both subject matter and how to teach subjects (i.e., pedagogy) is important in improving student performance, but it is not known exactly which levels of subject and pedagogical knowledge are necessary to positively impact student achievement, as there appear to be diminishing returns for most subjects.
- *Certification:* The overall research is unclear because of methodological problems. Generally, it indicates little difference for student achievement between fully certified teachers or emergency certified teachers, and suggests no certification is associated with lower student achievement, but a clear consensus has not emerged. A positive link has been established for certified math teachers at the secondary level and secondary student math achievement.
- *Advanced degree:* Research, which is somewhat limited, indicates there is not a connection between having an advanced degree in the subject taught and student achievement, except for secondary math (and to a lesser extent, secondary science) teachers.

Current State Initiatives to Address the Achievement Gap

There are several initiatives underway within the State Department of Education to help address the achievement gap issue in Connecticut. Many are relatively new and so the critical steps of actual implementation and consistent follow-through remain an unknown. The descriptions provided below are examples of major state-led reforms. There could be other initiatives underway or being developed within the department that were not known to the committee at the time of this report. As such, the initiatives described below should not serve as a complete list what is occurring at the state level to address the achievement gap.

Schools in Need of Improvement. Public Act 07-3 requires the State Board of Education to designate school districts considered in the greatest need of improvement (as defined under NCLB). The law requires SBE to increase its supervision and support activities within each of those districts, with the overall goal of increased student achievement. This includes: 1) evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of each district, mainly through required operations and instructional audits; 2) working with each district to develop plans for improving

low student performance and addressing the learning environment as recommended in the instructional audit; 3) approving certain expenditures for reform; 4) establishing instructional and learning environment benchmarks for the school or district to meet as it progresses toward removal from the list of low achieving schools or districts; and 5) monitoring progress. Twelve districts were initially identified, with three districts since added.

Technical assistance teams developed by SDE have been assigned to work with each district to support local administrators and boards to implement their improvement plans. If a district fails to make acceptable progress toward meeting benchmarks established by the State Board of Education and the adequate yearly progress requirements under NCLB for two consecutive years while designated as a low achieving school district, corrective action may be taken by SBE. The state education board may request the General Assembly enact legislation authorizing that control of the district be reassigned to SBE or another authorized entity.

CommPACT schools. Public Act 07-3 also authorized a new micro-level urban school reform called CommPACT, which involves the community, parents, administrators, children, and teachers collaboratively governing a school. The state appropriated \$480,000 to the Neag School of Education at the University of Connecticut for the development of an implementation plan and the provision of support (e.g., professional development, assessments) to up to twelve CommPACT schools. The Neag School is to report by January 1, 2009, on progress made and services provided, to the General Assembly's committees of cognizance and the commissioners of SDE and the Department of Higher Education. In fall 2008, eight existing schools became CommPACT schools: two each in Waterbury, Bridgeport, and New Haven, and one each in Hartford and New London.

The National Education Association Foundation is contributing an additional \$250,000 to fund a five-year evaluation of the CommPACT initiative by the Neag School, with the explicit aim of learning how to help close the achievement gap. The other partners in the initiative are the two state teachers' unions (American Federation of Teachers–Connecticut and Connecticut Education Association), Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents, Connecticut Association of Urban Superintendents, and Connecticut Federation of School Administrators. In addition, the Neag School has established a satellite office of the Institute for Urban School Improvement to facilitate implementation of the CommPACT initiative.

To become part of CommPACT, the Neag School must approve the school's application submitted by the local teachers' union and district representatives. An application will only be approved if it documents the support of the school's principal, at least 90 percent of the school's teachers, and the superintendent. A school that is approved for CommPACT becomes autonomous from the district and collaboratively determines its governance, budgeting, and curriculum. The CommPACT model is intended to increase student achievement by: 1) focusing on evidence-based instruction; 2) involving parents, the community, teachers, administrators, and students in schooling; and 3) improving teacher retention by showing teachers their input is needed and valued.

The CommPACT's collaborative model is based on Boston's Pilot Schools project, which has led to higher achievement among students on every measure, including test scores and

graduation rates (compared to those not attending the Pilot Schools).⁷¹ Several characteristics distinguish the Pilot Schools from others in the city: 1) accountable through five-year performance evaluations; 2) small size (maximum of 450 students), which facilitates attentiveness to individual student needs; 3) focus on and belief in every student's ability to achieve; and 4) ability to hire staff that supports the school culture and vision.

Scientific Research-Based Interventions (SRBI). As discussed earlier in this chapter, SDE released in 2008 the framework of an instructional reform involving high-quality (i.e., evidence-based and tailored) instruction for each child, early detection of any learning trouble, and the provision of increasingly intensive support to improve the achievement of a student having difficulty. SRBI is Connecticut's version of a federally accepted technique to bolster student achievement and, when possible, prevent placement into special education services. SDE has issued guidelines that mandate districts use SRBI to help determine whether a student should receive special education services, starting the 2009-2010 school year. The department also has issued grants to four districts to expand use of SRBI.

Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative. The education department established the Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative (CALI) in 2004. The initiative's goal is to provide state support to public school districts with high rates of poverty and high percentages of racial and ethnic minorities through a structured model to assist schools and districts in improving academic performance.

The CALI initiative provides free professional development support to schools and districts with high levels of poverty (Title I schools, schools identified as in need of improvement, and priority school districts). Support is available on a fee basis for other schools. Through CALI, the state education department offers training in 18 different modules to school districts. The training modules range from using classroom data for decision-making purposes to learning about certification requirements. CALI is being implemented in conjunction with the department's SRBI effort.

Summary

No direct link between Connecticut's teacher certification requirements and the achievement gap experienced in school districts in the state could be made, based on research presented to the committee. The committee believes, however, if a key goal of the education department – within the state's broader educational policy framework – is to make sure high quality teachers provide classroom instruction to public school students throughout the state so all students achieve at their highest academic levels, then it is imperative that the department continually monitor whether the state's certification requirements – both in terms of content and implementation – are supporting this goal.

⁷¹ "Strong Results, High Demand: A Four-Year Study of Boston's Public High Schools," Rosann Tung and Monique Ouimette, Center for Collaborative Education. Accessed on December 1, 2008, at: http://www.ccebos.org/Pilot_School_Study_11.07.pdf.

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Chapter II: Compliance with Certification Requirements

State and federal law require that students are taught only by teachers who have met a set of certification standards. The goal is to ensure teachers are qualified for their positions. Critical to reaching this goal is having an effective system within the State Department of Education to oversee the efforts of school districts thus ensuring all classroom teachers are qualified in accordance with Connecticut's certification requirements.

Connecticut state law requires teachers employed in a local or regional school district possess appropriate state certificates. Each certificate level – initial, provisional, and professional – has its own set of requirements. In conjunction with the certificate, a teacher must have a subject and grade-level endorsement that authorizes the teacher to take a certain assignment. The endorsement also has specific preparation requirements. The State Board of Education has the authority to certify qualified applicants, a task that is carried out by SDE.

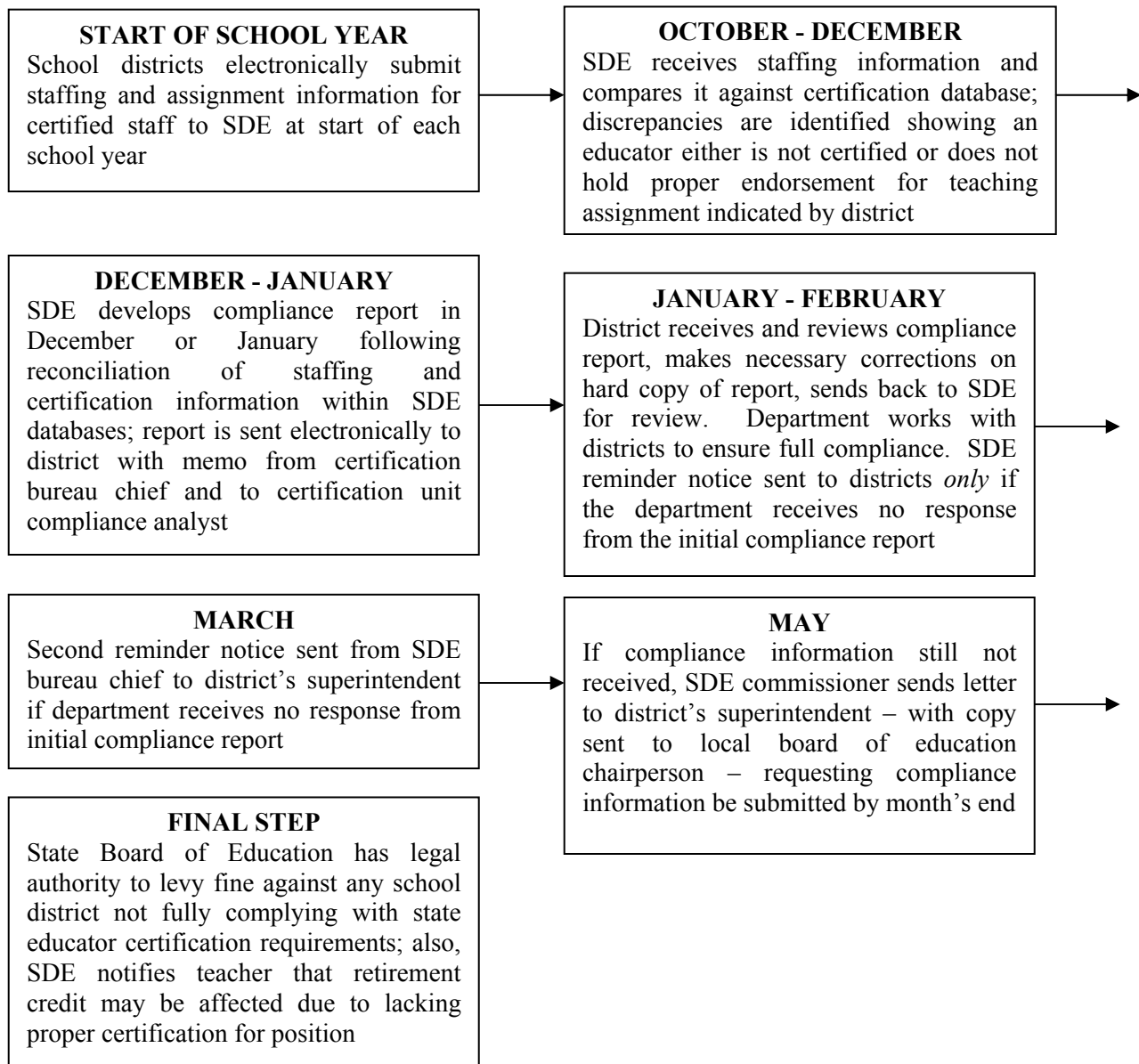
The State Board of Education also is charged with ensuring districts assign educators to positions for which they are properly certified. Districts must submit information to SDE annually about their educators' assignments. The department reviews the information to make sure districts have educators serving in positions for which appropriate certification is held.

The education department's oversight system established to ensure school districts comply with state teacher certification requirements was examined in this study. The system was specifically reviewed to determine: 1) the efforts undertaken by the department and state education board to make sure school districts comply with certification requirements for educators; and 2) district level of compliance. Compliance information received from the department included data for all certified staff: teachers, administrators, and student support specialists (e.g, school psychologists). As such, the analysis, findings, and recommendations provided below encompass the compliance system for all certified educators, including teachers.

Certification Oversight System

SDE has a system in place to oversee the efforts of local school districts to comply with state certification regulations for educators. Although the system's basic framework has been in place for roughly two decades, the compliance process has become more formalized over the past several years. The department has adopted a more structured system to track district compliance efforts and kept more detailed aggregate reporting of districts that are not complying with certification requirements. Figure II-1 highlights the key components of the department's certification compliance process.

Figure II-1. SDE Educator Certification Compliance Timeline



The certification compliance process begins with each district submitting to SDE its “staff file” information. The information includes staff names, assignments, and endorsement information as determined by the district at the beginning of each school year.

School districts send this information electronically to the department’s Data Collection and Management Unit within the Bureau of Data Collection, Research and Evaluation. Districts have limited access to the staff file; they may read information as well as directly submit and update personnel information for their district.

District staffing and assignment information is maintained by the department's data collection unit in one database. A separate database within the department houses educators' certification information, including information about an educator's level of certification and specific endorsement(s). One person within each of the certification and data collection units has primary responsibility for managing the respective databases.

The department generally provides a period of time after the start of the school year for districts to submit their staffing information. Once the information is submitted, SDE reconciles educator staffing information with the certification database information. Upon merging the relevant information of the two databases, the department identifies the educators within a school district who either: 1) have not received a state certificate; or 2) have a teaching assignment code listed by the district that does not match the endorsement information on record with the department. In either case, the district is deemed to be in non-compliance with the state's certification requirements. It should be noted that the department holds districts – not educators – primarily responsible for making sure their certified staff are working in assignments for which they hold the proper certification. Educators may, however, lose retirement credit for not being properly certified.

Once a complete listing of educators by school district is finalized by the data collection unit, the information is synthesized into a compliance report. The report highlights for the district the key information for each educator where discrepancies exist between the staffing information submitted by the district and the certification information maintained by the department. The report is then sent electronically to a designated contact person within the district responsible for managing the staffing information. At this time, the department also sends each school district a report indicating all the certified educators within a district whose certificates are set to expire within the next 18 months. This report alerts districts as to which of their certified staff will need to address their certification status within the upcoming year and a half or risk being identified through the compliance process as out of compliance.

Although districts may update their staff file information with SDE as hiring and assignment decisions are made, the department bases its compliance reports on the staffing and teaching assignment information on record with the department the day when SDE runs its annual compliance report. The report generally is produced during the one-month period between mid-December and mid-January each school year. The department noted during this study that it makes a concerted effort to ensure the overall completeness and accuracy of the information received from districts. The database manager sends a memo to all districts indicating when the final analysis of the staff file will be made, thereby notifying the districts to submit any outstanding information.

Once produced, the compliance report is sent to an experienced certification analyst within the certification unit responsible for completing the compliance process. The compliance function is only part of the analyst's overall responsibilities, which also include reviewing certification applications, assisting with the unit's dedicated phone lines used to handle certification-related inquiries, and helping to evaluate whether certification should be issued to an educator who has been convicted or dismissed from a position. The analyst has been responsible for the compliance function for just over a year, and estimates 60 percent of her time is spent on compliance-related matters from December through May.

Once districts receive the compliance reports from SDE, there is generally communication between the department and districts to ensure the accuracy of the information. Districts notify SDE of corrective actions taken to reach full compliance with certification requirements (e.g., assignment change, released from duty, obtained proper certification). Districts are first required to indicate on a hard copy of the compliance report the specific corrective measures taken. The department notes that, at times, a simple administrative error in the district staff file caused the compliance issue and that those are easily resolved between the district and the department. Data on the level of compliance by district are presented later in this chapter.

The SDE certification analyst overseeing the compliance process reviews the second-round information submitted by the districts. If the original compliance problems have been resolved or if there were no problems in the first place, the district receives a letter from the certification bureau chief indicating full compliance has been achieved. If, by mid- to late January – depending on when the compliance report was issued – a district has yet to respond to the compliance request, a reminder notice is sent by the bureau chief to the superintendent of the district under review. (No notices are sent if a district with compliance problems submits any response to the department.) The form memo, typically sent in January or February, requests the district indicate the corrective actions it has taken to bring all educators within the district into compliance with the certification requirements. Districts are provided several weeks to complete the request. If a district still does not reply, a second reminder notice is sent with a request for the district to respond by March.

Any district still not submitting its corrective actions after the bureau chief's second written reminder receives a letter from the commissioner, generally by early May. The form letter is sent to the district's superintendent with a copy to the chairperson of the local board of education. The letter indicates the district has not submitted the required information to SDE but has yet another opportunity to submit the information, which is typically due by late May (near the end of the school year).

The commissioner's letter further indicates that any teacher not in compliance with state's certification requirements may lose retirement credit earned through the Teachers Retirement Board (TRB) for the time the teacher was not properly certified. The letter also provides a reminder that the State Board of Education may order the district to forfeit a grant payment of \$1,000 to \$10,000, as determined by the commissioner, during the fiscal year following the noncompliance determination.⁷²

Level of Compliance

SDE's compliance records for the past three years were reviewed to determine school districts' overall compliance with state certification requirements. The information was analyzed from several different perspectives, with an emphasis on the districts not complying with certification requirements (in accordance with the way SDE compliance reports are designed).

As noted earlier, the information used in the analyses below is based on all educators who must be certified. Thus, the data include not only public school districts, but also charter schools,

⁷² C.G.S. Sec. 10-145(b).

Regional Educational Service Center (RES-C) districts, endowed schools, state-run schools, and special education facilities – collectively referred to in this chapter as “districts.”

Overall compliance. As a way of providing context to the degree to which educators are not in full compliance with state certification requirements, the number of certified educators statewide and the number of educators determined not in compliance with certification requirements were examined. A comparison of these factors was made to first determine the level of noncompliance across the state.

As illustrated in Table II-1, *the total number of educators found out of compliance at the end of the 2006, 2007, and 2008 school years is minimal in relation to the total number of educators who held certification in the state during those years.* Across the three-year span analyzed, approximately two-tenths of one percent of educators in Connecticut was found to be in non-compliance with the state’s certification requirements. The number of educators not in full compliance with certification requirements ranged from a low 52 in 2006 to a high of 136 in 2007.

Table II-1. Total Number and Percent of Educators Not in Full Compliance with Connecticut Certification Requirements: School Years 2006, 2007, and 2008			
<i>School Year</i>	<i>Total Employed Certified Educators*</i>	<i>Total Compliance Issues at End of School Year</i>	<i>Percent of Educators Out of Compliance</i>
2005-06	53,319	52	0.1%
2006-07	53,832	136	0.3%
2007-08	54,120	96	0.2%
Three-Year Totals	161,271	284	0.2%
*Includes teachers, support services personnel, and administrators Source of data: SDE			

Given the low percentage of educators not in compliance with state educator certification requirements – or, conversely, the high degree of compliance – it begs the question as to why the state should devote resources to the function of ensuring districts fully comply with state certification requirements. The answer is threefold. First, it is a federal requirement under No Child Left Behind (NCLB) that every child in a public school be taught by a highly qualified teacher. In Connecticut, all teachers must meet state certification requirements for their particular assignment as a condition of being deemed highly qualified, and one way on ensuring this at the state level is through the compliance effort. Further, the state risks losing federal funding under NCLB if teachers do not meet the highly qualified standard. To date, this has not happened in Connecticut; SDE is expecting another federal monitoring visit under NCLB within the next year.

Second, Connecticut law requires districts employ properly certified educators. As such, the state would not know whether districts comply with the law without an adequate compliance monitoring process.

Third, *the potential number of students taught daily by teachers who are not appropriately certified in Connecticut and thus deemed not qualified under the state's certification standards, could be several thousand.* Given specific certification standards exist in Connecticut, the state has determined that teachers who fall short of meeting those standards are not as qualified to teach students as those who meet the standards. Accordingly, students taught by non-qualified teachers may be at risk for an inferior education, strictly based on whether a teacher meets Connecticut's certification requirements.

By way of illustration, 96 of the 136 educators not properly certified during the 2006-07 school year were teachers. If 25 of those teachers taught at the secondary level, teaching an average of five classes per day, with 20 students per class, a total of 2,500 secondary students (100 students per teacher, per day, multiplied by 25 teachers) would have received instruction daily from a teacher who was not properly certified in accordance with Connecticut's standards. In addition, if the remaining teachers were elementary or middle school teachers with an average class of 20 students, another 1,420 students would potentially have been taught by teachers without proper certification. This example shows the potential number of students impacted on a daily basis. Moreover, the time during which students potentially are affected over the course of a year substantially increases the longer a district employs educators who are not in full compliance with certification requirements.

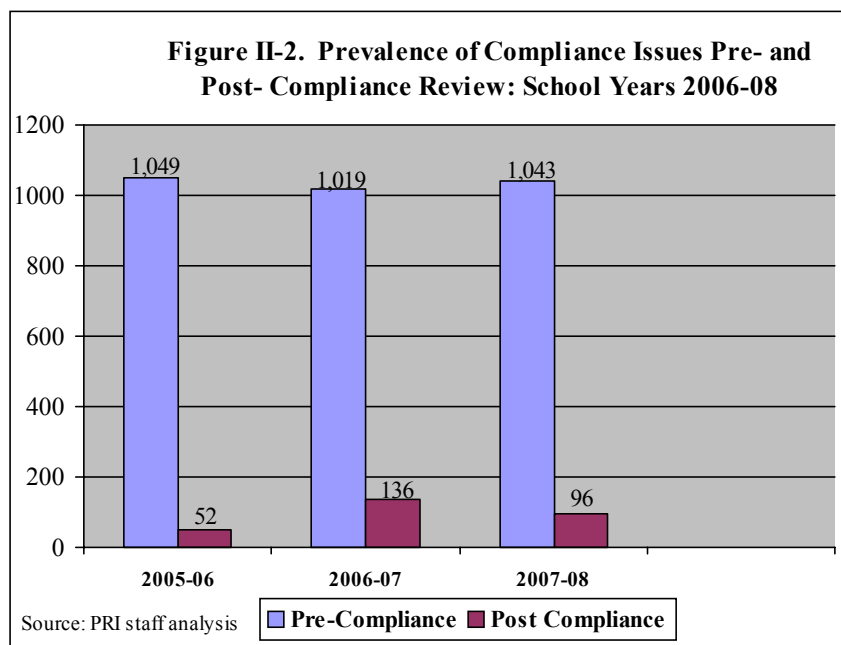
Types of noncompliance. SDE has two categories it uses to identify noncompliance among educators: 1) those with no state certificate, permit, or authorization; and 2) those with a state certificate but lacking the proper endorsement for the assignment provided by school districts on the staffing information submitted to SDE. Table II-2 provides this information for the last three school years for all districts.

As the table shows, noncompliance problems were almost evenly split over the three-year period between educators who did not hold a state-issued certificate and those who held a certificate but without the proper endorsement. Also, the proportion of the problems due to educators with no state certificate steadily increased over the three years, while the proportion due to educators without the proper endorsement steadily declined.

Table II-2. Types of Noncompliance Problems at the End of School Years 2006, 2007, and 2008		
<i>School Year</i>	<i>Educators with No State Certificate</i>	<i>Educators Without Proper Endorsement for Their Assignment</i>
2005-06	19 (37%)	33 (63%)
2006-07	63 (46%)	73 (54%)
2007-08	64 (67%)	32 (33%)
Three-Year Totals	146 (51%)	138 (49%)
Source of data: SDE		

Compliance problems by district. Compliance information extracted from the department's staff file database was analyzed to determine the prevalence of: 1) problems present at the beginning of the compliance process and problems unresolved at the end of the process, both overall and by individual district; 2) educators out of compliance as a percent of all educators within a district; and 3) districts not responding to the initial compliance report by year's end after reminder notices from the certification bureau chief and SDE commissioner.

A comparison of the percent of compliance issues at the start of the compliance process with those remaining at the end of the process is provided in Figure II-2. The figure reveals that a low number (and percentage) of compliance issues remained unresolved at the conclusion of the compliance process. Over the three years analyzed, the percent of unresolved compliance issues ranged from a low of 5 percent for 2006 to a high of 13 percent in 2007.



The department's compliance data were further examined to determine which districts had the highest percentage of compliance problems. School districts were grouped into four categories based on the total number of educators within the district. The information was also analyzed to determine the number and percentage of compliance issues that remained unresolved at the conclusion of each school year.

Table II-3 shows the five districts in each educator size category that had the most compliance problems in the last three completed school years. The vast majority of compliance issues identified by SDE at the beginning of the year were resolved by districts prior to the end of the school year. The table also shows that districts other than traditional local and regional districts (e.g., charter schools) with relatively few educators had the highest percentage of compliance errors to total number of educators identified at the beginning of the compliance process and, generally, at the end of the compliance process.

Table II-3. Compliance Problems Information: School Years 2006-08				
<i>District</i>	<i>Total Certified Educators</i>	<i>Total Compliance Problems</i>	<i>% Compliance Problems of Total Certified Educators</i>	<i>Compliance Problems Unresolved by Year's End</i>
2006				
1-50 Educators				
Elm City College	16	8	50%	1 (13%)
Arch Bridge School	13	6	46%	0 (0%)

Stamford Academy	17	7	41%	6 (86%)
Amistad Academy	21	6	29%	1 (17%)
Mount Saint John School	14	4	29%	0 (0%)
51-150 Educators				
American School for the Deaf	61	13	21%	0 (0%)
Eagle Hill School	68	7	10%	0 (0%)
Thompson School District	127	9	7%	0 (0%)
East Windsor School District	123	7	5%	3 (43%)
Woodstock Academy	89	5	6%	0 (0%)
151-300 Educators				
Bloomfield School District	259	17	7%	5 (29%)
Region 14 School District	189	12	6%	0 (0%)
Coventry School District	182	7	4%	1 (14%)
Plainville School District	246	7	3%	0 (0%)
Region 10 School District	249	7	3%	0 (0%)
301-500 Educators				
CREC	356	13	4%	0 (0%)
New Canaan School District	406	14	3%	0 (0%)
Vernon School District	364	12	3%	0 (0%)
Windham School District	370	12	3%	0 (0%)
Newtown School District	451	11	2%	1 (9%)
501 or More Educators				
Greenwich School District	950	41	4%	2 (5%)
Hartford School District	2,240	89	4%	1 (1%)
Bridgeport School District	1,736	64	4%	9 (14%)
New Haven School District	1,859	51	3%	1 (2%)
CT Tech High School System	1,323	35	3%	7 (20%)
2007				
1-50 Educators				
Yale Child Study Center	3	2	67%	1 (33%)
Stamford Academy	13	7	54%	7 (100%)
Park City Prep	10	5	50%	2 (40%)
Amistad Academy	33	11	33%	9 (82%)
Explorations	7	2	26%	1 (50%)
51-150 Educators				
Eagle Hill School	67	14	21%	0 (0%)
Preston School District	53	3	6%	0 (0%)
Thompson School District	126	7	6%	2 (29%)
Lisbon School District	56	3	5%	0 (0%)
Woodbridge School District	79	4	5%	0 (0%)
151-300 Educators				
New London School District	283	21	7%	3 (14%)
Unified School District #1	211	13	6%	0 (0%)
Old Saybrook School District	161	9	6%	0 (0%)
Bloomfield School District	260	13	5%	7 (54%)
Region 16 School District	224	8	4%	2 (25%)
301-500 Educators				
CREC	364	14	4%	0 (0%)
Windham School District	367	9	3%	1 (11%)
New Canaan School District	409	10	2%	3 (30%)
Farmington School District	394	9	2%	1 (11%)
Branford School District	360	8	2%	0 (0%)
501 or More Educators				

Hartford School District	2,268	110	5%	2 (2%)
Greenwich School District	945	31	3%	0 (0%)
Bridgeport School District	1,700	53	3%	19 (36%)
CT Tech High School System	1,386	36	3%	0 (0%)
West Hartford School District	950	24	3%	10 (42%)
2008				
1-50 Educators				
Achievement First Bridgeport	8	7	88%	5 (71%)
Stamford Academy	12	6	50%	3 (50%)
Boys and Girls Village	9	4	44%	1 (25%)
MCCA A.R.T. School	5	2	40%	0 (0%)
Amistad Academy	46	18	39%	12 (67%)
51-150 Educators				
Eagle Hill School	61	24	39%	1 (4%)
Thompson School District	126	7	6%	1 (14%)
North Stonington School Dist	90	5	6%	1 (20%)
Essex School District	55	2	4%	0 (0%)
Oxford School District	140	5	4%	2 (40%)
151-300 Educators				
Unified School District #1	222	88	40%	0 (0%)
New London School District	291	20	7%	3 (15%)
Norwich Free Academy	201	12	6%	5 (42%)
Bloomfield School District	257	14	5%	6 (43%)
Region 14 School District	199	6	3%	2 (33%)
301-500 Educators				
New Canaan School District	409	15	4%	1 (7%)
CREC	378	10	3%	0 (0%)
North Haven School District	334	8	2%	0 (0%)
Windham School District	381	9	2%	0 (0%)
Vernon School District	362	8	2%	0 (0%)
501 or More Educators				
Bridgeport School District	1,755	70	4%	14 (20%)
CT Tech High School System	1,341	45	3%	0 (0%)
Greenwich School District	943	25	3%	4 (16%)
New Britain School District	866	19	2%	0 (0%)
Stamford School District	1,501	28	2%	2 (7%)
Note: Figures current as of SDE compliance report dates. Source: PRI analysis of SDE data				

Districts with the most unresolved compliance issues. As noted above, there may be ramifications for student learning if students are taught by teachers (or schools are operated by administrators) who do not possess the necessary certification credentials in accordance with Connecticut's certification standards. SDE's records were analyzed to determine the districts with the most unresolved compliance issues for educators at the end of the school years. The information presented in Table II-4 is for all educators, including teachers, for various types of districts with certified educators and is based on one factor: the total number of outstanding compliance issues at the end of the school year.

Table II-4. School Districts/Programs with the Most Unresolved Educator Certification Compliance Problems at End of School Years 2006-2008

<i>Districts/Programs</i>	<i>Total Unresolved Compliance Problems At End Of School Year</i>
2006	
Bridgeport	9
CT Technical High School System	7
Stamford Academy	6
Bloomfield, West Hartford	5
East Windsor	3
Greenwich	2
Districts with 1 unresolved compliance problem	15
2007	
Bridgeport	19
West Hartford	10
Amistad Academy	9
Stamford	8
Bloomfield, RSD 6, Stamford Academy	7
Elm City College, Fairfield	6
ACES, New Beginnings, New Haven	4
New Canaan, New London, Trumbull	3
East Hartford, Hartford, Park City Prep Charter, RSD 16, Thompson, Trailblazers Academy	2
Districts with 1 unresolved compliance problem	24
2008	
Bridgeport	14
Amistad Academy	12
Elm City College	8
Bloomfield	6
Achievement First, Norwich Free Academy	5
Greenwich	4
New London, RSD 6, Stamford Academy	3
Killingly, Oxford, Park City Prep, RSD 14, Stamford, Waterbury, West Hartford, Weston	2
Districts with 1 unresolved compliance problem	17
Source: PRI analysis of SDE data	

As Table II-4 shows, several school districts consistently ranked among the districts with the most unresolved compliance issues in at least two of the three school years analyzed. For example, Bridgeport had the most unresolved issues each year, while Bloomfield, West Hartford, Amistad Academy, and Stamford Academy ranked near the top for at least two of the three years examined. It should be noted that SDE is aware of the districts with perennial compliance issues. The department recently worked with the state's three largest urban districts to help institute operational changes within those districts designed to bring the districts into full compliance with certification requirements by strengthening their data reporting capabilities. The department reports the three districts have made progress in solving their compliance-related problems, although additional work is needed to ensure educators within those districts fully comply with state certification requirements on an annual basis.

District Reference Group. District Reference Group (DRG) is a classification system developed and used by the State Department of Education that measures certain characteristics of families with children attending public schools. Districts that include students with similar socioeconomic status and need are grouped together to form a DRG. There are nine DRGs categorized “A” through “I”; District Reference Group A includes the towns at the highest end of the socioeconomic continuum. (See Appendix L for a listing of school districts by DRG.)

The department of education’s compliance information was analyzed to determine whether school districts in noncompliance with certification requirements tended to belong to particular DRGs. The analysis was conducted for school years ending 2006-08 and the results are shown in Table II-5. It should be noted that DRG designation is only available for local and regional public school districts and not for schools operated by other entities, such as RESCs, the state, or charter schools.

As the table shows, there is a relatively balanced distribution among DRGs of the overall number of districts having outstanding compliance problems each of three years analyzed. Although differences exist among DRGs when strictly analyzing the number of districts with year-end outstanding compliance problems, no specific DRG stands out as having a widely disproportionate share of districts with unresolved compliance issues. The unresolved compliance problems also generally correlate to the average number of educators by DRG. Over the three years, the average numbers of educators by DRG are: A (2,827); B (8,704); C (3,555); D (7,674); E (2,428); F (2,745); G (6,203); H (5,892); and I (8,822). Three of the four DRGs with the most cumulative compliance problems over the three-year period also averaged the most educators.

The table also shows that DRG I, which is comprised of the towns with the poorest socioeconomic conditions, had more year-end unresolved compliance issues than all other DRGs. Speculation was heard during this study that a key reason that such districts have more compliance issues is because of difficulty in hiring and/or retaining teachers. This difficulty may force lower socioeconomic districts to use teachers who are not properly certified at a higher rate than other districts, a claim not examined during this study.

Table II-5. School Districts with Unresolved Certification Compliance Problems by DRG School Years Ending 2006-2008								
2006			2007			2008		
<i>DRG</i>	<i># Districts</i>	<i># Unresolved Problems</i>	<i>DRG</i>	<i># Districts</i>	<i># Unresolved Problems</i>	<i>DRG</i>	<i># Districts</i>	<i># Unresolved Problems</i>
A	0	0	A	3	5	A	2	3
B	4	9	B	4	20	B	2	6
C	3	4	C	0	0	C	6	4
D	0	0	D	3	3	D	1	1
E	2	2	E	3	10	E	3	5
F	1	3	F	5	6	F	2	2
G	1	5	G	1	7	G	4	10
H	0	0	H	2	10	H	1	2
I	3	11	I	6	29	I	3	19
Source: PRI analysis of SDE data								

Findings and Recommendations

The ability of SDE to ensure teachers are properly certified in accordance with state requirements is an important component of the overall certification process, as well as in achieving the state and federal goal of having students taught by qualified teachers. Without adequate information and thorough knowledge of educator assignments within districts, the compliance system is not fully effective. An ineffective compliance process increases the potential for students to receive instruction from teachers not meeting state certification standards.

Compliance information. *Due to the design of the current compliance monitoring system, the state may not have a comprehensive view of how well school districts and educators across the state are complying with the state's teacher certification requirements.* The department's compliance process is entirely dependent upon the staffing, educator assignment, and endorsement information submitted by school districts at their discretion. As a result, the state cannot be fully assured that the information coming from districts is complete, accurate, or timely. This does not imply that districts are intentionally submitting incorrect information, although the department has found discrepancies in district information in the past.

The SDE compliance monitoring process does not independently verify the information submitted by districts through any type of on site monitoring visit. The compliance system is only as good as the information received from districts, which the present system cannot completely ensure represents educators' professional status at the district level.

As noted, SDE recently worked on site with three districts – as part of the department's broader Connecticut Accountability Learning Initiative – to identify solutions to perennial compliance issues within those districts, although no follow-up with those districts or visits to additional districts are currently planned. SDE's work with those districts resulted in state certification staff directly examining the data collection efforts and certification processes of those districts. The education department staff went into those on site visits with prior knowledge of each district's compliance deficiencies. SDE noted during this study that the department and districts were able to work through many of the deficiencies with the goal of making district compliance efforts more effective.

A comparable effort is not planned for any of the remaining districts within SDE's current initiative for assisting schools identified as in need of improvement or any other school district having persistent certification compliance problems. As a result, the department remains solely dependent upon the staffing and assignment information submitted by districts. The committee believes SDE is missing an opportunity to directly work with school districts to increase their capacity to collect and submit proper information and to refine their internal operations with the objective of ensuring greater, if not full, compliance with the state's educator certification requirements. The department also needs to take a more proactive approach – beyond its current desk audit process – to ensure even greater compliance efforts across school districts.

The program review committee recommends the State Department of Education should implement an on site monitoring program as part of its overall system of ensuring school districts and educators fully comply with the state's certification requirements. Spot

audits of a random sample of districts should be made annually, with an audit of each district in Connecticut occurring at least once every five years. More frequent audits of districts with substantial or perennial problems should be conducted. As part of any on site compliance audit, the department should offer districts technical assistance and support to improve districts' overall efforts to comply with state educator certification requirements and the ability of internal systems within districts to produce accurate, timely, and complete compliance information. The department should determine the extent of the new on site inspection program and seek additional resources commensurate with the new monitoring efforts.

This recommendation will enhance the department's overall compliance monitoring system beyond the current desk audit process. Although additional resources are likely required to implement the on site inspection initiative, the level of such resources depends on the system designed by the department to conduct the monitoring visits.

If the state is fully committed to making sure all educators within districts throughout the state comply with certification standards and all students are taught by qualified teachers, on site monitoring inspections and technical assistance will provide an effective way to bring about better compliance among districts – particularly for those districts the department identifies as having chronic compliance problems. On site monitoring is also consistent with the compliance efforts of other types of state licensing and certification programs. For example, the Department of Public Health is required by statute to conduct on site inspections of licensed child care facilities. The inspections are part of the department's overall licensing function and aim at ensuring provider compliance with state licensure requirements. The overriding goal of the recommendation is to lessen the number of students potentially taught by nonqualified teachers by decreasing the number of educators not in full compliance with state certification regulations.

Enforcement. A proactive educator certification compliance system greatly depends on the State Board of Education. Without the board's backing through action to enforce district and educator adherence to the state's certification standards, the department's compliance efforts will continue to fall short in this regard. *Beyond receiving a letter from the SDE commissioner, there are no consequences for districts still out of compliance after several warnings and opportunities to resolve problems, possibly resulting in districts minimizing the state's compliance process.*

The State Board of Education does not take a proactive approach in requiring districts to comply with the state's certification requirements for educators. The board has not addressed the issue of compliance nor used its legal authority to require school districts to comply with certification requirements. The committee believes that as long as the state's policy is to require educators meet specific certification standards, the board of education has a responsibility to oversee and enforce this policy to the fullest extent.

The State Board of Education should make compliance with state certification standards among school districts more of a priority at the board level. The board should take a more proactive approach to ensuring school districts and educators fully comply with the state's certification standards on a regular basis, including publically releasing the names of school districts in non-compliance and applying the board's authority in accordance with C.G.S. Sec. 10-145(b) when necessary.

Enforcement of certification standards should not be an end unto itself. Rather, a passive stance on enforcing compliance based on whether districts employ educators who meet the state standards for certification only serves to continue the employment of unqualified educators. The example provided above as to the number of students potentially being taught by a teacher lacking appropriate certification serves to underscore the importance of increased enforcement of certification standards by the state education board.

A key part of the enforcement process prior to the board's involvement is the interaction between SDE and school districts. *SDE only initiates formal communication from the bureau chief and the commissioner if districts do not respond at all to the department's compliance reporting requirements. Moreover, communication from the commissioner occurs after three notifications from the department that compliance information is required, and essentially comes near the end of the school year.* By this time, students could potentially have received instruction for months from teachers not in compliance with state certification requirements.

For those districts that respond to the department's request for compliance information, as identified through the department's annual compliance report, current practice gives them until the end of the school year to submit the necessary information, regardless of attempts by the certification analyst responsible for compliance to obtain the information earlier. At the same time, there is no formal communication from either the bureau chief or commissioner to these districts, as long as they have responded in some way to the information request.

The committee understands the need for (and the intention of) the department to work collaboratively with districts to obtain the necessary compliance information, yet believes the process is too extended in that it could take a full school year before resolution, if any, occurs. Moreover, there is no formal communication from either the bureau chief or the commissioner to districts with compliance issues, as long as the districts have responded to the department's request for information in some manner. The department's administration only formally notifies districts if they have not made any attempt to submit the required compliance information.

The program review committee recommends the only formal notification from the state education department to school district superintendents and local/regional boards of education chairpersons should come directly from the commissioner within five business days of when a district does not submit the required compliance information upon first request. If the necessary information regarding the corrective actions taken by a district is not received within 10 business days of receipt of the commissioner's letter, the matter should be forwarded to the State Board of Education for action. The state education board, or a designated committee thereof, should begin the process of enforcing compliance in accordance with the board's statutory authority.

This recommendation is intended to drastically reduce the amount of time educators, particularly teachers, work without proper state certification. Moreover, the compliance process as a whole needs the backing of the state board through use of its current authority to enforce compliance among school districts as a way of getting districts to respond to the department and resolve compliance issues more quickly. The recommendation should result in fewer students taught by teachers who are not properly certified.

Teacher Retirement Credit. Connecticut passed legislation in 2008 (P.A. 08-112) affecting how the Teachers' Retirement Board accounts for retirement credit for teachers who previously taught in assignments without proper certification.⁷³ The law also has an impact on SDE's current certification compliance process.

The new law retains the previous requirement that any teacher possessing a state certificate (or permit) who is notified by SDE as not properly certified for his or her position, will not receive additional retirement credit under TRB until the teacher obtains the proper certification. The education department generally notifies teachers they are out of certification compliance only at the end of the school year, after SDE has unsuccessfully asked districts multiple times to remedy noncompliance problems. Under the new law, the Teachers' Retirement Board is not permitted to rescind any service credited to a teacher for the time spent teaching without the proper certification prior to the teacher's notification from SDE. This law applies to any teacher notified by the department on or after December 1, 2003, as not properly certified for his or her teaching assignment. The new law further requires TRB to restore any applicable retirement credit to any teacher if the credit was rescinded prior to May 27, 2008 (the date the law was signed by the governor).

The new law makes it more imperative that SDE complete its compliance process in a timely manner because TRB cannot retroactively revoke a teacher's retirement credit, and may only revoke future credit after SDE provides notification that a teacher is not properly certified. Although this new process benefits teachers in that they cannot lose retirement credit earned prior to notification by SDE regarding improper certification, the impetus for the new law may indicate: 1) assignment information was not properly reported to SDE by districts; 2) administrative deficiencies exist within the state's compliance oversight process allowing teachers not properly certified to go unnoticed; and 3) teachers either are unaware they are not properly certified for their assignments or they overlook the requirements. Regardless, the new law puts more onus on the department and TRB to ensure teachers are properly certified for their assignments and retirement credit is properly awarded.

It is unclear at this time what communication and coordination has taken place between the education department and the Teachers' Retirement Board regarding the new law. Interviews held during this study revealed the department regularly forwards to TRB the information it has on file for teachers not certified at all; information about teachers not properly certified according to their endorsements is not sent to TRB. Although some information is exchanged between the two agencies, additional communication needs to occur to determine the best way to approach the statutory change resulting from P.A. 08-112 and exactly what information needs to be coordinated between SDE and TRB to effectively meet the new retirement credit provision. This is particularly important because TRB relies on the teacher assignment and certification information supplied by SDE for properly applying teachers' retirement credit.

The program review committee recommends the State Department of Education and the Teachers' Retirement Board determine by February 1, 2009, the most effective process between the two agencies for ensuring teachers are provided proper retirement credit based on their state certification status. SDE should begin sending information to TRB on

⁷³ P.A. 08-112, Sec. 3. Effective May 27, 2008.

teachers not properly certified as soon as it becomes available through the annual compliance report generated by the education department.

Automated certification system. The recommendations made above strive to strengthen the overall effectiveness of the state's certification monitoring system for educators. The recommendations must be implemented, however, in coordination with the department's forthcoming automated certification system. The new system is anticipated to affect the department's certification compliance process in several ways. Foremost is the elimination of the paper process used by the department and districts to make any necessary corrections to compliance issues. Districts are anticipated to have the ability to indicate directly within the certification system the actions they have taken to correct compliance issues identified by the department. The ability to complete the compliance process via an automated system should enhance the overall effectiveness of the process, including increasing the frequency with which the department may review districts' compliance efforts.

The program review committee recommends the State Department of Education ensure its new automated certification system will have the full capacity to allow the department to monitor school districts' compliance with state certification requirements for educators throughout the year instead of the current process, which is based on a one-time compliance report generated annually.

Although an automated system is being implemented that most likely will make the compliance process more *efficient*, such a system does not lessen or negate the state's overall responsibility to implement an *effective* certification monitoring process to ensure full compliance across school districts on a frequent basis.

Chapter III: Unit Operations

The teacher certification unit has three main tasks to accomplish in its daily operations: evaluating certification applications, overseeing continuing education providers, and conducting outreach on certification requirements. These activities, as well as the oversight and resources used to accomplish them, are explained and assessed in this chapter, with recommendations where appropriate. A fourth key task, serving districts and the public, is covered in the next chapter.

EVALUATION OF CERTIFICATION APPLICATIONS

Carrying out the state's teacher certification requirements is a primary function of the State Department of Education's Teacher Certification Unit. This section describes how educator certification requests are processed and evaluated. From July 2007 through June 2008, the unit issued nearly 22,500 certificates, permits, and authorizations; additional applications were received but were incomplete or denied. According to SDE, a complete application is processed in about six weeks, while an incomplete or complex application requires more time.

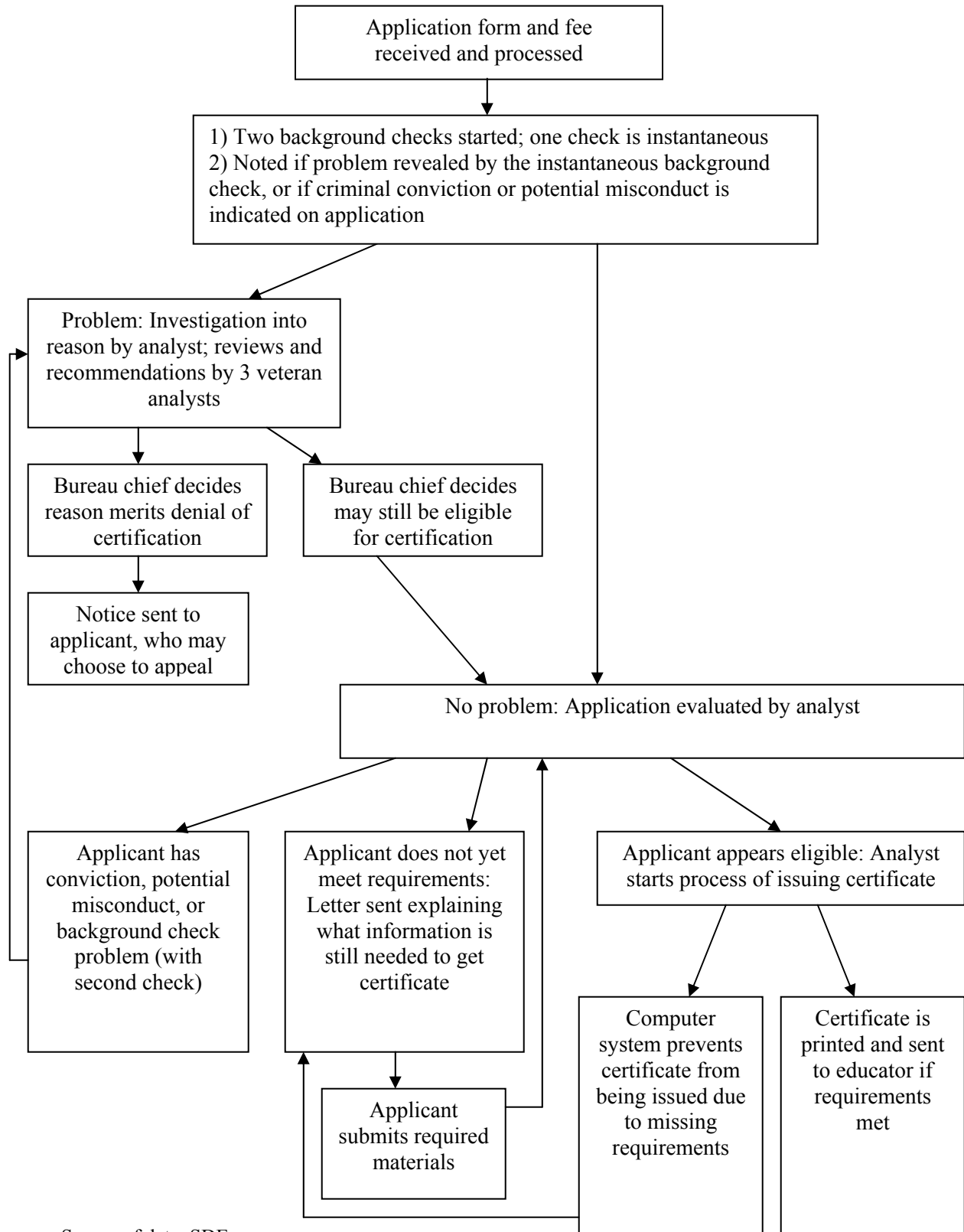
Figure III-1 shows the general process used for evaluating certification applications. Certification analysts are charged with determining an applicant's eligibility for certification once all necessary documents appear to have been received. The eligibility decision is based mainly on coursework and experience requirements set out in statute and regulations. For complex applications, the analyst is guided by an internal policy manual.

Each application form is checked for both completeness and the applicant's attestation that the basic requirements have been met. In addition, every application must contain the recommendation of a teacher preparation program and/or school district as appropriate to the situation. Analysts then may audit or more intensively evaluate certain applications – for example, those from out-of-state applicants – as called for by long-standing department policy, which is based on state law.

Teacher certification eligibility decisions are checked to an extent by the electronic certification system. The system will not allow certification to be issued to an applicant who has not yet met the assessment, fee, and background check requirements. An applicant who is not currently eligible for certification is sent a letter that describes what requirement(s) must be met before a certificate may be issued.

The certification unit also deals with certification denials and revocations. An applicant may be denied certification when the bureau chief – with the input of veteran analysts – determines that documentation of one or more criminal convictions, dismissals from past positions, or disciplinary actions provides sufficient evidence the applicant does not abide by the principles set forth in the Connecticut Codes of Professional Responsibility for Teachers and School Administrators. A licensed educator's certificate may be revoked when the person has been convicted of particular crimes or when a process initiated by an interested party shows violation of the codes. In any denial or revocation situation, the educator may request a review of the decision.

Figure III-1. Certification Process for New Applicants



The process used to evaluate applications and issue certification appears reasonable, with some modifications and additional oversight as discussed later. The unit's computerized system has built-in mechanisms that ensure only educators who have met the assessment and background check requirements are issued certification.

The time it takes the unit to process applications also seems reasonable. In discussions held for this study, education stakeholder groups agreed that while a faster process is always desired, the current processing time is sufficient. Educators who were surveyed for this study also concur: less than eight percent indicated their application had not been processed in a timely manner. (See Chapter IV for a description of the survey.) The results of a file review of certification applications as part of this study provide further evidence of processing timeliness. One hundred randomly selected applications from educators who were issued certification in early and mid-August 2008 indicate the median time from the unit receiving all necessary materials to issuing a certificate was 12 calendar days, well within the unit's stated standard of six weeks.⁷⁴ Finally, that standard is higher (i.e., the review process is to take less time) than that of other populous Northeastern states.⁷⁵

Application Evaluation Process

All applications and accompanying materials are processed in the order in which they are received. SDE stated processing takes four to eight weeks, primarily because many applications arrive incomplete. This period varies and may be longer, depending on the current volume of applications, whether all necessary supporting documentation was sent in with an application, and the complexity of an applicant's teacher preparation and experience. SDE's website recommends someone applying for continuation of a professional certificate do so at least six weeks before the certificate's expiration date; a few months before is preferred by the unit. The department receives applications for certification every mail day throughout the year.

SDE uses two types of filing systems to process certification applications: electronic and paper. An electronic database holds information from all materials each licensed teacher or recent applicant has ever sent to the certification unit, results of all tests and background checks (described later), and certificates issued. The hard-copy file system contains a file for each application an educator has submitted. All materials received from the applicant, including any e-mails between the applicant and analyst that explore specific qualifications, are included. There is no comprehensive hard-copy file kept on any person, but all of an educator's application materials may be accessed through storage.

⁷⁴ The time from the unit receiving all necessary materials to granting certification is used because the unit can only fully process applications that are complete. Applications may arrive at the unit incomplete, lacking payment, transcripts, or supplementary application forms (e.g., recommendation from school district or teacher preparation program). In these cases, the unit contacts applicants, a median of six days after receiving the application form according to the file review. The minimum and maximum processing times for complete applications were four and 50 days, respectively.

⁷⁵ The processing times of some other Northeastern states are six to eight weeks in Massachusetts and Vermont, and three months in New Jersey and New York. Maine and New Hampshire's processing times are between one and two weeks. This information was obtained through telephone and e-mail conversations with the certification units of those states. The unit in Rhode Island was unresponsive to several requests.

The application evaluation process for someone newly seeking certification is described below. The process is essentially the same for a Connecticut educator applying for new or continued certification.

1. Application materials sent to SDE. All applications mailed or hand-delivered to the certification unit are date-stamped upon receipt. At the same time, the accompanying fee payment is processed. Each application requires a \$50 fee for review.⁷⁶ Required application materials sent in without an application form do not need to include any fee payment, but an application form must be accompanied by a full or partial fee payment.⁷⁷ An application form lacking any payment, or with a payment by cash or personal check, is returned to the sender with a letter of explanation and any other application materials that arrived in the same envelope.

SDE occasionally receives parts of an application – most often, college transcripts or a letter with questions about how to attain certification – before an application form has been received. Whenever application materials are received without an accompanying application, a support staff person checks the electronic database to see whether a file for that person already exists, and accordingly either puts all application materials together or starts a new file. Praxis I and II scores also are received electronically by the unit and placed into the appropriate files.⁷⁸

2. Application information entered in database and background checks begun. The time between when application materials are first opened and when information is entered in the database is usually between one and five days, according to SDE. Rarely, when application volume is very high, up to two weeks may pass.

At this stage, the support staff person also checks the application form and database to see if the applicant could potentially be denied certification. All application forms ask whether the person has been convicted of a crime (excluding minor traffic violations), has been dismissed for cause from any position, or had disciplinary action taken against a credential. An application containing at least one affirmative answer is given to one of the two analysts who handle these cases, called the “facilitator analysts” for this report. In addition, background checks are conducted of applicant criminal and educator credential histories; each applicant whose form indicates a conviction or negative action against a credential is also assigned to a facilitator analyst.⁷⁹ (More information on how these situations are handled is provided later in this

⁷⁶ The fee is payable only by money order, cashier’s check, or certified bank check.

⁷⁷ The general application form instructs applicants to send in a \$50 review fee. This fee is applied toward the cost of whatever certificate for which the applicant ends up qualifying. If the applicant is not issued a certificate, the fee is kept by the department. The fee is applied toward the certificate cost even when an applicant completes missing requirements or otherwise becomes eligible for certification at a later date. If an applicant sends in less than \$50, which only rarely happens, the unit will process the payment and evaluate the application but will not issue the certification until the \$50 review fee plus the balance of the certificate fee has been paid.

⁷⁸ ETS, which administers the Praxis tests, sends the electronic results of all Praxis tests taken in Connecticut to the certification unit each week. Prospective applicants who complete the Praxis tests outside of the state must arrange for a copy of their scores to be sent by ETS to the certification unit. The results are merged with the database by a certification analyst; files automatically are created for those who had not yet submitted certification applications.

⁷⁹ An application given to a facilitator analyst is not necessarily denied. The applicant is required to submit a signed statement of explanation, letters of recommendation, and, if applicable, copies of court or administrative records, for a thorough evaluation by veteran certification staff and the bureau chief.

section.) All other applications are then distributed to certification analysts according to their assignments.⁸⁰

Credential check. When a new applicant's Social Security number (SSN) is entered in the database, a background check is automatically conducted of the NASDTEC registry of educators who have had their certificates revoked or suspended in other states.⁸¹ Nearly all states, plus some Canadian provinces and Puerto Rico, participate in the registry. If the NASDTEC background check turns up information, the system will not let a certificate be issued for that applicant. Then, the support person gives the application to a facilitator analyst, who contacts the education department in the jurisdiction that issued the denial or revocation to learn the reason for the action. This step is taken because some of the reasons for which particular jurisdictions deny or revoke certification (e.g., failure to pay student loans, union dues, or child support, and leaving a contract) would not make an educator ineligible for Connecticut certification. There are about five "hits" on the NASDTEC registry each year, according to SDE.

Criminal conviction check. When a new applicant submits an application form, a Connecticut criminal records check is begun. This check is performed weekly and takes a few days to complete. The name(s) and date of birth of each applicant is run to see whether the applicant has been convicted of a crime in this state.⁸² While this background check is being run, the application may move on to the next step of the process, review by an analyst. If there is a hit on the criminal background check, then in most cases it does not occur until after the application has been distributed to a regular analyst. The database will not allow an analyst to issue a certificate to any person who has a background check problem that has not been examined by a facilitator analyst.

There are several potential logistical problems with the criminal background check, according to certification staff. First, the electronic certification system recognizes only one former last name, so a person who was convicted of a crime under another last name will not be flagged on the public safety list. Second, if a mistake is made in entering the personal information, information similarly will not appear because the name or date of birth would not match an existing record. Third, a few times a person has been mistakenly identified as an offender due to identity theft. A similar problem could arise if an applicant and an offender share a name and date of birth.

Two issues regarding conviction checks are being addressed in ways that will improve public safety. The background checks will become more comprehensive under the new certification system (described later in this chapter) as it will include up to three former last

⁸⁰ Applications for special permits, for initial certificates from graduates of Connecticut preparation programs, and for continuations of professional educator certificates, are given directly to the analysts who handle these particular topics. Other applications are placed in a specific file location. The files are organized by date received, and within the date, by last initial, so each analyst takes the most recent files that fall under the assigned last initials for review.

⁸¹ The entire database of certificate, permit, and authorization holders is run through the NASDTEC registry each month, in addition to the automatic check conducted on a new applicant.

⁸² The entire database of certificate, permit, and authorization holders is submitted to the Department of Public Safety (DPS) for a background check twice each year (in April and October), in accordance with state law (C.G.S. Sec. 10-221d(e-f)). These background checks do not show convictions of crimes in any other state(s); however, the fingerprint check educators are required to submit to upon employment by a district is a national check.

names. Further, the Department of Public Safety's criminal conviction database will become more up-to-date, which should result in an elimination or alleviation of the few times a year the department receives new hits for old convictions. These hits are most likely the result of a backlog in the data entry of convictions for minor offenses, according to the Department of Public Safety and the Office of Policy and Management, which has a key role in coordinating the state's criminal justice databases. A recent grant is funding an effort to eliminate the data entry backlog.

3. Application is evaluated. For an application that does not require a special review, SDE noted that within a day to one week of data entry, the analyst begins to assess it. Before the evaluation begins, the analyst first double-checks the file for the factors that lead to further investigation (criminal conviction, dismissal for cause, and action against a credential) and for completeness.

Incomplete application. Application materials often arrive at SDE piecemeal, starting with the Praxis or other test scores. If an application is incomplete, the analyst sends the applicant what is called a "credential letter," which explains what outstanding materials the department still needs to receive for evaluation of the application. When the missing materials arrive, they are entered into the computer system by a support staff member and properly filed with the other submitted materials.

One analyst estimated a majority of all applications sent to SDE lack at least one required component (e.g., a transcript). In fact, many applications are never completed; certification staff stated there are currently about 10,000 files that need more information before an analyst could conduct a full evaluation.⁸³

Complete application. When all necessary materials have been placed in the applicant's file, the analyst reviews the materials to evaluate whether the preparation and/or experience requirements for certification have been satisfied. The analyst also determines which level of certificate is appropriate. The review of a complete application that is not complex may take only a few minutes. In contrast, the review of a complex application may require an hour or more. Different levels of certification and other circumstances need varying types of reviews, as described later in this section.

Generally, the evaluation covers the following topics:

- *Endorsement:* The requested endorsement must match the applicant's field of preparation.
- *Preparation and/or experience:* The applicant must submit evidence of having completed coursework and/or experience, and the state(s) in which the

⁸³ These files were purged annually from the early 1990s through the early 2000s. SDE reported that staff resources prevented purging in recent years, until spring 2008. When a purge begins, all applicants who had given no new application materials to the department in about 18 months are sent letters asking them to notify the department if they remain interested in attaining certification. The files of those who reply affirmatively are kept, while all others are purged.

coursework and/or experience were obtained determines what requirements must be met.

- *Length of experience*: Did the applicant teach for three school years (30 months) within the last 10 years under a full certificate? If so, the provisional or, for National Board-certified applicants only, professional certificate may be appropriate.
- *Bachelor's degree*: The applicant must have completed a bachelor's degree at a regionally accredited higher education institution in order to receive a teaching certificate.⁸⁴
- *District's statement of experience*: If the applicant has teaching experience, has the district(s) indicated the experience was successful? If not, the application needs to go to the analyst who handles these cases.
- *Other supporting documentation*: What other materials provide evidence the applicant has met Connecticut's certification requirements?

The materials reviewed differ depending on the applicant's places and quantity of experience and preparation.

Certification analysts noted to committee staff they believe their job is to find a way within the regulations for applicants to get certified to teach in Connecticut. They examine past preparation and experience closely to give a prospective teacher the highest-level license and most numerous endorsements for which the applicant is qualified.

Problems in determining eligibility. There are a few application components that make determining certification eligibility difficult. First, an applicant may have refused to give personal information, such as SSN or date of birth, on the application form. In these cases, the certification staff has difficulty matching the application or supporting materials to an already-existing electronic file. A missing SSN is a particular problem because the department currently uses the SSN as a primary identifier. The SSN is preferred to a name because people's last names may change.⁸⁵ If a person has not submitted the SSN on the application, the analyst who manages the electronic database assigns the applicant a tracking number, but this tracking number obviously is not on information that comes from other sources. The new computer system for certification, discussed later in this chapter, will rely on a unique, SDE-assigned identifier, not on an SSN, as the primary identifier.

⁸⁴ A bachelor's degree is not necessary for some certificates that allow holders to teach in vocational-technical schools and for certain authorizations.

⁸⁵ Until recently, the SSN had an additional advantage for processing certification applications: It was listed on a person's higher education transcript, making it easy to match transcripts to a person regardless of changes in name. However, many higher education institutions have stopped including the SSN on transcripts.

Second, transcripts sometimes do not clearly convey whether the classes taken match Connecticut's coursework requirements. Analysts must review the transcripts of an applicant's teacher preparation coursework if the educator comes from a state that lacks an interstate certification agreement with Connecticut. When it is unclear whether the required coursework has been completed, an analyst examines the institution's course catalog for more information on the course's content. If the catalog description is insufficient, the analyst sends a letter to the applicant, requesting, if possible, a course syllabus or a letter from the professor to more fully explain the course content. These supplementary materials are given full credibility. For example, when a syllabus reveals the topics prescribed by Connecticut are covered in a course, the applicant is considered to have met those requirements. If the materials are not sent, the applicant is not considered to have met the requirements and therefore is deemed currently ineligible for certification.

Third, a few problems arise with the requirement that the superintendent or designee from an applicant's past district mark a box attesting that the teacher had a "successful" experience. If a designee completes the district portion of the form, an authorizing letter from the superintendent must have been submitted to SDE.⁸⁶ According to SDE, a few times analysts have had difficulty verifying the appropriate person attested to the experience.

Some administrators believe indicating the teacher was "successful" is equivalent to releasing information on performance, which is forbidden by collective bargaining agreements, according to SDE. In response, the SDE bureau chief has decided it is acceptable for a district to submit a letter stating that the applicant has no pending disciplinary actions and is in good standing with the district. A district that neither provides such a statement nor checks the "successful" box for a particular applicant is contacted by a certification analyst. The analyst attempts to remedy the situation by asking for a statement that the applicant was neither under any type of investigation nor subject to disciplinary action. If the analyst is unable to obtain such assurance, the application is referred to a facilitator analyst.

4. Eligibility decision is made. When an analyst determines the applicant is eligible for certification, the analyst enters the information for the certificate (e.g., certificate type, endorsement, and effective dates) in the database. The analyst then makes sure that the background checks were clear, the test(s) required for the endorsement(s) has been passed, and all fees have been paid. If any of these requirements have not been met, the system indicates the problems and will not allow the certificate to be granted or printed until all requirements have been met.

If the system clears the applicant for certification, there is a 24-hour waiting period before the certificate can be issued and printed. The built-in delay allows an analyst additional time to check for and correct mistakes. When the waiting period is over, the application is

⁸⁶ An applicant who taught in a Connecticut district is allowed to have someone else at the district office attest to the experience. (A Connecticut district needs to submit a letter only once because SDE keeps a running list of districts that have submitted such letters and the identity of each designee.) An applicant who taught in another state may have the form completed by either the superintendent or, without providing a verification letter, the human resources director. The distinction was made because out-of-state districts often have more enrolled students and certified employees.

considered issued and the phone interactive voicemail response (IVR) system is updated to tell the applicant the information on his or her new certificate.

Certificates are printed in a single batch each week by support staff. Then, on the same day, a certification analyst proofreads all the certificates for typing errors and, for those certificates with unique durations, deficiencies, or deferrals, checks the certificate against the person's files for accuracy. The certificates are then sent out, and the hard-copy application folders are stored. Each box of application folders is assigned a tracking number, which enables certification analysts to easily find old applications if a problem arises with an educator's files. The files are retained on site at SDE.

Unclear eligibility. If an analyst determines an applicant might be ineligible for certification, the analyst may ask a colleague to review the file before the applicant is notified. If an application is difficult, the analyst is more likely to seek out a co-worker, and will examine the internal policy manual, which provides guidelines for complex situations that frequently occur.⁸⁷ When the manual is of no help, the analyst asks a unit coordinator for assistance. If the unit coordinator cannot provide definitive guidance, the analyst receives help from the bureau chief.

Ineligible. When an applicant is determined currently ineligible due to missing coursework, test scores, or fees, notification is sent by mail. Analysts can send either a credential or narrative form letter. The credential letter is a form document that notes in a checklist format what the applicant needs to complete in order to become eligible for certification. There is a space on the form for additional clarifying notes from the analyst who was in charge of the review. A narrative letter is also a form document, but the analyst tailors most of the language to the applicant's specific situation.

The bureau chief encourages staff to use a narrative letter when the application is complex (e.g., multiple preparing institutions, foreign preparation or experience, or the applicant has multiple contacts with the certification analyst). Regardless of which type of letter is used, it is considered to be from the analyst.

An applicant who is currently ineligible, regardless of the reason, might first discover the application status through the telephone interactive voice response system. Callers are told what documents are missing and that a letter has been sent.

The application is then held on file because "ineligible" is a decision that can be reversed when new materials are received. When the applicant sends a fee payment or a transcript showing previously missing coursework has been completed, a certification analyst reviews the new information.⁸⁸ If there are no other deficiencies, the analyst grants certification. If the educator is still missing at least one component, the application is given to the analyst who

⁸⁷ The bureau chief has the discretion to change the policies in the manual. Consequently, complex situations may be handled differently after a new bureau chief takes the position.

⁸⁸ If the sole deficiency was a Praxis test, the analyst in charge of the electronic certification system is notified when the requirement has been met by a list of test results received produced by the database. The analyst spends about one day each week reviewing the certification files of those test completers who have valid certification or an application pending.

originally reviewed the application. If several months have passed since the original evaluation occurred, the analyst will send another credential letter, reminding the applicant of what material(s) is still missing.

There is no formal appeals process for a decision that an applicant currently is ineligible. Some applicants who disagree with the decision have contacted the bureau chief. In these cases, the bureau chief reviews the file, talks with the analyst about the decision and the process used to reach it, and decides either to uphold the ineligibility determination or grant certification.

Denied. According to statute, SDE may deny a request for certification or other authorization to teach for the following reasons:

- fraud or misrepresentation of fact on the application;
- court conviction for a crime “involving moral turpitude” or any other crime that the State Board of Education (SBE) believes would demean the value of a certificate; or
- other due and sufficient cause,⁸⁹ in which the department includes but does not limit to dismissal for cause from any position or being subject to disciplinary action regarding an occupational credential.

When SDE is alerted to any such occurrence by the application form and/or the background checks, an analyst who specializes in handling these situations (i.e., facilitator analyst) receives the application. At least 100 such applications are submitted each year, according to SDE.

The same process is followed for each matter to ensure all applicants are treated the same way. The unit’s examination of those applicants will be formally tracked by the new certification system, enhancing SDE’s ability to ensure the proper steps have been followed. The facilitator analyst begins by sending a letter to the applicant, requesting the submission of several types of documentation:

- official records relating to the situation;
- the applicant’s personal explanation of what happened and what has been done to remedy the problem;
- contact information for relevant organizations and people who can clarify or verify the situation; and
- three personal recommendations.

If the problem was discovered through a background check and was not disclosed on the application form, the facilitator analyst first sends a letter asking why the applicant did not note it. SDE stated that most often, people reply that they did not believe a non-felony conviction or a

⁸⁹ C.G.S. Sec. 10-145b(m-n)

conviction from many years ago was necessary to disclose.⁹⁰ When applicants have legal representation, the analyst goes to the attorney with all communications.

When necessary, a facilitator analyst researches the matter through letters and phone calls. Organizations like the district(s) in which the applicant taught may be contacted, and court records obtained if not submitted by the educator who had a conviction. Interviews are not conducted. Once all relevant materials have been gathered, the analyst writes an overview of the case and includes it in the application file, which also contains the research materials and statutes relating to denial standards.

The whole application file is then evaluated by a committee of three veteran analysts from within the unit and ultimately by the bureau chief. The veteran analysts are permanent reviewers of these cases for two reasons, according to SDE. First, they are familiar with the relevant statutes, regulations, and codes. Second, permanency ensures consistency among decisions. Neither facilitator analyst serves on the committee.

The committee members independently review the case using the materials compiled by the facilitator analyst. Then, each one gives an individual recommendation, with rationale, to the bureau chief using a standardized form. The recommendation is to be based on the factors outlined in Table III-1.

The bureau chief reviews the materials and reads the three reviewers' recommendations. The chief is not bound by the recommendations or rationales, but may choose to review a recommendation with a particular committee member for clarification. The bureau chief makes the certification decision.

An applicant who is denied certification is notified by letter. The letter summarizes the situation (including the investigative steps taken by the facilitator analyst), gives the relevant statute citations, and provides the statutory reason for the denial. It also explains how a review of the decision may be requested, and includes the regulations outlining how a review is conducted. (The process of a denial review is described later in this section.)

An applicant who is not denied is potentially eligible for certification.⁹¹ A facilitator analyst works with each applicant while the case is being processed to get all application materials so that the certificate may be granted quickly if the application is not denied. If there are outstanding materials after the bureau chief's decision has been made, the applicant is informed and asked to send whatever is necessary. If all components have already been obtained and the applicant meets certification requirements, the certificate is sent.

⁹⁰ Someone who had a conviction that was expunged or who had been pardoned is not obligated to disclose the conviction.

⁹¹ The facilitator analyst removes the hold placed on the application by the electronic database, allowing a certificate to be issued.

Table III-1. Criteria Against Which Potential Certification Denial Cases are Evaluated	
<i>Type of Case</i>	<i>Criteria</i>
Conviction	1. Nature of crime and relationship to job for which person has applied for certificate: Was it a violation of professional ethics and will it impact person's effectiveness? 2. Degree of rehabilitation: Has person demonstrated ethical conduct for six months to five years after probation/sentence completed? 3. Time elapsed since conviction or release
Disciplinary action regarding credential	Code of Professional Responsibility for Teachers or Administrators, as appropriate
Dismissal from position	1. Code of Professional Responsibility for Teachers or Administrators, as appropriate 2. If necessary, conviction criteria listed above
Source of data: SDE certification analyst training manual	

SDE noted a simple further review case, with a minor misdemeanor conviction for an offense committed long ago, takes about one month to work its way through the process. A more complex case, with a serious offense or a pattern of small offenses that may indicate a behavior problem, may take a year or two to resolve, especially if the bureau chief has denied certification and the applicant requests a review of the decision. Simple cases are the majority of these applications and generally are approved for eligibility.

Types of Application Reviews and Audits for New Certificates

At least one certification analyst thoroughly evaluates each application submitted to SDE. The type of review an application receives depends on the applicant's preparation, experience, level of certificate requested, and whether the applicant or the recommending program has been selected for an audit (which involves verifying the preparation or continuing education courses taken). The review process for applications for new certificates – including who receives which type of review, and what the review entails – is described in Table III-2 below, and in the following text.

Table III-2. Types of Reviews and Audits of Applications for New Certificates		
Certificate Level and Type of Review	Who is Subject to Type of Review*	What Is Reviewed
Initial Certificate		
Typical Review	All graduates of CT teacher preparation programs not randomly chosen for audits, and teachers from states that have agreements with CT and either: a) taught under a full certificate for or at least 3 school years (27 months but less than 30 months); or b) graduated from a teacher preparation program (except for alternate routes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Either statement of preparation institution that requirements were completed or (for out-of-state applicants only) statement of district(s) regarding professional experience and copy of certificate• Transcript(s), for brief check of program and bachelor's completion (out-of-state applicants only)• Application form
Random Audit	10% of graduates from each CT teacher preparation program, weighted according to subject/content representation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Transcript(s), for thorough review of coursework• Either statement of preparation institution that requirements were completed, or (for out-of-state applicants only) statement of district(s) regarding professional experience and copy of certificate• Application form
Audit Prior to Accreditation Review	All graduates of CT teacher preparation programs that will be undergoing review for state accreditation in the coming full year	
Audit for Probationary Status	All graduates from CT teacher preparation programs on probation	
Transcript Review	All beginning teachers from states without interstate agreements with CT, all graduates of alternate route programs in states that have interstate agreements with CT, and all who taught in approved nonpublic CT schools for at least two school years	
Provisional Certificate		
Typical Review	All teachers in CT who have successfully completed the BEST program or, if not applicable, taught for at least one school year under initial certificate; and all teachers with at least three school years (30 months) of teaching experience in states that have interstate agreements with CT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Statement by district that attests to professional experience• Copy of certificate (out-of-state teachers, only)• Successful completion of the BEST assessment, as applicable (CT applicants only)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transcript(s), for brief check of program and bachelor's completion (out-of-state applicants only) • Application form
Transcript Review	All teachers who have three school years (30 months) or more of teaching experience in states without interstate agreements with CT, and all teachers who have at least three school years (30 months) of teaching experience in approved nonpublic CT school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transcript(s), for thorough review of coursework • Statement of district(s) regarding professional experience • Copy of certificate (out-of-state applicants only) • Application form
<i>Professional Certificate: New Applications</i>		
Transcript Review	All applicants: experienced teachers in CT who have 30 post-baccalaureate semester hours of credit and taught under provisional certificate for at least three school years (30 months), and National Board certified teachers (who are the only out-of-state teachers who begin at professional level, provided they have 30 post-baccalaureate credits)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transcript(s) showing 30 post-bachelor's credits • Statement by district that attests to professional experience • Copy of other state and National Board certificate (if applicable) • Application form
<p>*Any pathway to a provisional or professional certificate that specifies years of experience, requires all the experience to have been obtained within the past 10 years. The pathway to an initial certificate based on experience for an educator from an interstate agreement state requires the experience to have been obtained within the past seven years.</p> <p>Source of data: SDE</p>		

Typical application review. Typical review requires the analyst to examine mainly the application form, which includes a teacher preparation program recommendation and/or a district's attestation to successful teaching experience. A typical review is conducted when an applicant completed either: 1) a teacher preparation program in Connecticut; or 2) a teacher preparation program⁹² or three school years (27 months) of experience in a NASDTEC agreement state.

The rationale behind not thoroughly evaluating these transcripts is that the certification unit has already examined and approved in-state preparation programs (through the state accreditation process) and the preparation program approval process and certification requirements of the NASDTEC agreement states (through the periodic review of other states' policies for the interstate contract). The department believes an applicant who has met those

⁹² NASDTEC states' alternate route programs that do not involve a preparation program at an institution of higher education recommending the applicant for certification do not qualify as teacher preparation programs for the purpose of Connecticut's interstate agreements.

requirements has the knowledge to meet Connecticut's certification requirements. Analysts do quickly review the transcript(s) of an applicant from a NASDTEC agreement state to ensure the transcript verifies the completion of a planned preparation program that included student teaching (if the applicant does not have three school years of experience under a full certificate) and of a bachelor's degree. Similar transcript review is not required for the applications of Connecticut preparation program graduates undergoing typical review; these applicants do not need to submit transcripts as part of their shorter applications for initial certification.⁹³

Transcript review. Transcript review requires the analyst to thoroughly evaluate transcripts from higher education institutions attended. This review is conducted when an applicant for initial certification has *not* completed either: 1) a teacher preparation program in Connecticut or a NASDTEC state; or 2) at least 27 school months of teaching in a NASDTEC state under a full certificate. A transcript review is required in this situation because it is not clear to SDE whether the applicant has sufficient preparation to be a certified teacher. In the review, the analyst checks that the applicant has completed all specific coursework required of a certificate with the endorsement sought. If an applicant is missing any coursework other than the required special education course, a certificate cannot be issued.

A transcript review is also conducted of each teacher who is applying for a new professional certificate because one requirement of the certificate is that 30 semester hours of post-baccalaureate credit must be completed. Transcripts are required from the institutions at which an applicant completed all or part of these credits, and are reviewed only to ensure the applicant earned the required total number of credits.

Audit. An applicant who would normally undergo typical review might be selected for an audit. A person who is chosen for an audit is notified by a letter that further documentation must be submitted before the certificate can be issued.⁹⁴ The analyst fully reviews the documentation to determine whether the requirements of the requested certificate have been met.

An applicant who graduated from a Connecticut teacher preparation program and is applying for an initial certificate may be selected for an audit for several reasons. All graduates of a particular program and/or endorsement area at a program are audited when the:

- teacher preparation program has been put on probation by the state's accrediting committee;
- teacher preparation program will be undergoing an accreditation review within the next 12 months; or
- endorsement area is brand new for that particular teacher preparation program.

The results of these audits are used in the programs' accreditation evaluations. The accreditation audits have uncovered problems twice over the last three years, showing that these reviews sometimes illuminate problems. The number of audits conducted in a year for

⁹³ Applicants who are graduates of Connecticut teacher preparation programs are allowed to submit a unique application, called a "short form," which, as the name suggests, is shorter than the general application for certification.

⁹⁴ A copy of the audit letter for an applicant for initial certification is sent to the certification officer at the applicant's preparing institution.

accreditation purposes varies depending on which programs are up for re-accreditation and on probation because the size of the graduating class differs among programs, from about 240 in three programs to fewer than 50 in another three.⁹⁵

In addition to the audits for accreditation purposes, 10 percent of every institution's graduates are audited to ensure the preparation program is recommending only graduates who have met all program and state requirements. Within that 10 percent, each endorsement area is given weighted representation, although at least one graduate from each area is audited. This policy equates to at least 300 transcript reviews per year; SDE does not track the quantity.⁹⁶

Such audits are considered to be of the institutions, not of the applicants. In these audits, the analyst assigned to the particular institution checks the applicant's coursework against the list of the preparation program and endorsement area's required courses. Any gaps in the person's coursework that are discovered are discussed with the institution, while applicants are held harmless and still receive certification.⁹⁷ The audits began in 1994, when the short form application for graduates of in-state preparation programs was introduced. As the short form application does not require in-state graduates to submit transcripts, audits are conducted to ensure programs recommend only those graduates who have met all the institution's and state's requirements.

The unit's current policy holds Connecticut preparation programs to a different standard than those programs in interstate agreement states. Preparation programs in agreement states are never checked for compliance with certification regulations by SDE staff and might not be checked by their home-state departments of education.

The policy, however, does not unfairly discriminate against applicants from Connecticut programs because a recommended educator candidate from an in-state program whose transcript indicates incomplete preparation is still certified (except if a major component, such as student teaching, was missing). When an issue is discovered, the certification unit alerts the preparation program and orders the problem be fixed. SDE reports that in the last three years, this thorough review policy enabled certification analysts to detect five programs that were improperly recommending candidates who had not met the state's certification coursework requirements, and then remedy the situation.

The program review committee recommends the State Department of Education should change its transcript review policies by reviewing the coursework of 25 percent of graduates (with at least one review of a candidate from each endorsement area) for Connecticut educator preparation programs that will be undergoing state accreditation review or are on accreditation probation, and expanding the review to include all graduates if any problems are found. At the same time, the current policy of reviewing the

⁹⁵ *Title II State Report 2007 – Connecticut*, SDE, submitted to the U.S. Department of Education. Accessed on November 14, 2008, at: <https://title2.ed.gov/Title2DR/CompleteReport.asp#Sec7>.

⁹⁶ The approximation of 300 was calculated by PRI staff as ten percent of the annual average number of first-time certificates issued to completers of Connecticut educator preparation programs, according to data provided by SDE.

⁹⁷ If an applicant were missing a major requirement, such as student teaching, the applicant would not be held harmless. SDE reported most, if not all, mistakes found through audits of graduates from Connecticut programs are relatively minor, such as missing one general education course or the U.S. history class.

coursework of about 10 percent of all Connecticut educator preparation programs' graduates should remain unchanged.

This recommendation is intended to lessen the amount of staff time used to conduct thorough transcript reviews while maintaining review at a level sufficient to detect problems and provide information necessary to the state preparation program accreditation process. The current policy regarding review of preparation programs not under accreditation review should remain in place so that problems may be found quickly, as state accreditation review only occurs every fifth year.

Applications for new provisional certification are not audited because there are no additional coursework requirements to meet. Therefore, there is nothing to audit.⁹⁸

Assessment of Application Reviews

There are no checks of whether certification applications were properly evaluated. The unit does not conduct any type of review of evaluated applications to ensure the appropriate certificate and endorsement were issued, and the coursework requirements were met.

The program review committee recommends the State Department of Education's certification unit management should periodically review application materials and the certification decisions made by analysts, to ensure applications are being properly processed.

Certification analysts' main task is reviewing applications to grant certification. Systematic evaluation of application reviews is important to ensure this key unit function is performed accurately. The committee understands the time of the unit manager is limited but believes quality oversight is a good business practice and important to ensuring the unit is accomplishing its task of issuing certification appropriately. The unit manager is encouraged to delegate the responsibility for ongoing quality oversight to coordinators within the unit who are experienced certification analysts with that designation but who currently have no management responsibilities.

Reviews of Applications for Continuation of Professional Certificate

One analyst processes all applications for continuation of a professional certificate; an additional analyst assists during high-volume years. The analysts also randomly select by hand and then audit five to ten percent of all these applications.⁹⁹

Typical application review. A typical review of a continuation application involves checking that the applicant's basic information (e.g., endorsement) matches the electronic database, and that the person indicated he or she did one of the following: 1) completed the nine

⁹⁸ An applicant for provisional certification must have successfully completed the BEST program, but compliance with this requirement is checked by an internal, computerized process within SDE.

⁹⁹ The audits are not purposefully equally distributed among endorsement areas. This would be difficult because assigning most professional educators to only one endorsement area would be impossible. Many at this certificate level hold multiple endorsements and/or are taking graduate coursework to obtain an additional endorsement (e.g., administrator or school counselor).

CEUs; 2) did not work under the certificate during the past five years; or 3) worked only part of the last five years.

Audit. A certificate holder randomly selected for an audit is sent a letter that explains the audit and asks for the submission of CEU verification within 20 days of the letter's receipt. Acceptable verification methods are original CEU completion certificates (which are supposed to be kept by both the educator and the CEU provider), a signed document from the educator's district listing all CEUs earned in-district, a copy of the National Board certificate, and an official transcript showing graduate-level credits.¹⁰⁰ There is no penalty if the materials are not sent within 20 days; the deadline is given only to expedite the process.

When verification is sent, the analyst checks to make sure the CEUs:

- were from an approved provider;
- add up to nine CEUs;
- were earned while the currently held certificate was valid; and
- are in either the endorsement area in which the educator spends at least half of working hours¹⁰¹ or the area in which the educator is attempting to obtain an additional endorsement.

An educator who is audited and has not completed CEUs as required will not receive a continuation certificate until evidence has been submitted showing the requirement has been met. If some documentation has been received but is inadequate (e.g., does not meet the requirement for nine CEUs), SDE sends a letter notifying the applicant of the problem and stating that certification will lapse unless sufficient documentation is provided to the unit.

There currently is no oversight of CEU audits. The number, quality, and results of CEU audits are not tracked by certification staff. It is impossible for department management to check whether audits were conducted appropriately because CEU documentation provided by the educator currently is not consistently kept by the department once the audit has been completed. Due to the complete lack of data and oversight, any analysis of CEU audits could not be conducted as part of this study.

Oversight of CEU audits will be facilitated by the new certification system. The new system described below, when implemented, has three features that will enable oversight of CEU audit quantity and quality. It will have the capacity to maintain each educator's CEU documentation (to be scanned in by the department), track when an educator has been audited, and randomly select a percentage of applicants for audits.

The department also is in the process of gaining the ability to obtain CEU verification without even contacting educators. About half of Connecticut school districts pay for a web-based continuing education tracking and evaluation tool offered by an in-state company called

¹⁰⁰ An audit at this stage does not entail a review of undergraduate or post-baccalaureate credits, only of CEUs attained.

¹⁰¹ An exception is made if the applicant has recently (i.e., within the last year or two) changed positions. Then, the CEUs must be relevant to either the past or current area of work.

ProTraxx.¹⁰² Continuing education transcripts kept by ProTraxx (or through other means by districts) may be submitted for CEU verification in lieu of course completion certificates issued to continuing education participants by districts or other providers. The education department currently is in the final stages of negotiating a contract with ProTraxx that would grant SDE certification analysts access to the ProTraxx files of educators applying for continued professional certification to conduct instant audits of their CEU work. If an educator did not have a ProTraxx file or appeared to have not fulfilled the CEU requirements, then the analyst would contact the educator to request hard-copy documentation, as is currently done.

Districts that choose not to purchase and use ProTraxx may pay for alternative tracking methods, devise their own method, or provide completion certificates and leave tracking CEUs to individual educators. (A district that selects the last option must still keep a record of the CEUs it has offered and who has participated, but need not keep individual educator records.) About 70 percent of the districts responding to the committee survey indicated they have an automated way of tracking educator CEUs.

A majority of the educator survey respondents believed their districts keep adequate CEU records. Educators who had applied for the continuance of a professional certificate theoretically needed to have their CEU documentation (in case of an audit) and therefore would be in the best position to judge whether the districts' record-keeping was sufficient. Of this group of educators, about 77 percent believed their districts keep sufficient CEU records, a percentage that seems high until one considers how the other 23 percent (whose districts might not keep sufficient records) would have fared if audited.

The program review committee recommends the State Department of Education should use the new certification system's CEU-related abilities to implement oversight of CEU audits by tracking the quantity of the audits and conducting occasional checks of the audit quality.

Tracking of the quantity and quality of CEU audits has not been occurring, but it is necessary to ensure the unit is carrying out its task of overseeing compliance with certification requirements. The new certification system (described below) and potential ProTraxx contract will assist in the implementation of CEU audit oversight by: 1) enabling the number of audited educators to be counted; 2) allowing for overseers to instantly check ProTraxx continuing education transcripts for those audited who have such transcripts; and 3) storing scanned-in CEU documentation for overseers to review for fulfillment of the continuing education requirements. The department is encouraged to take any steps that would facilitate oversight of CEU audits until the above recommendation is implemented.

New Certification System

The education department's certification system has an electronic file for each person who has held educator certification at any time since 1984 (when the database was implemented), has taken the educator certification tests in Connecticut or had the results sent to

¹⁰² ProTraxx's website is accessible at: www.protraxx.com.

the state, or has submitted any application materials (e.g., transcripts) over the last 18 months. The file lists all activity, including certificates granted and application materials received.

SDE for several years has been in the process of developing a new, web-based certification system to replace its decades-old system. The new system expands on the current system's functions and will be accessible via the Internet, which will allow educators the option of applying for certification online. The certification unit is to begin using the system internally in December 2008, and, if adequate funding for system maintenance is obtained, the system will become available to educators in early 2009. Four other Northeastern states – Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, and New York – also have or are in the process of implementing an online certification system.

SDE's new web-accessible certification system should result in a quicker and easier process for educators and department operations if it becomes available to the public in early 2009 as planned.

Educators probably should save time and money by using the new certification system. Applying online and the option to pay the certificate fee via credit card should eliminate the costs of printing and sending a hard-copy application, as well as of obtaining one of the currently-allowed methods of payment (certified check, money order, or cashier's check). The department's new ability to scan in all of an applicant's submitted transcripts should mean that the educator no longer will need to obtain, pay for, and send in multiple transcript copies over a career. In addition, applicants' identities should be more secure. Each educator's primary identifier is to change to a random number from the Social Security number, which will still be collected for the purpose of background checks.

The certification unit likely should have more time to dedicate to reviewing applications or completing other tasks because the new system should reduce staff processing time, in several ways:

1. Fewer applications probably should arrive missing either paperwork or payment because the online application is to be fully submitted to the department only when finished and educators will be able to submit payment online. Incomplete applications currently require department staff to follow up with applicants and delay processing.
2. Administrative staff should have more time for other functions (e.g., scanning applicants' transcripts) because the new certification system is to automatically sort applications submitted online to the appropriate consultants, bypassing the process of administrative staff opening and manually sorting application envelopes. The automation of the sorting process also should result in fewer lost (hard-copy) applications, which infrequently happens with the unit's relatively high volume of applications.
3. The unit should spend even less time responding to Freedom of Information (FOI) requests because access to each educator's basic certification information will be available online. One certification analyst currently spends a small amount of

time responding to FOI requests. Under the new certification system, anyone who wishes to obtain certification information about an educator (level of certification and endorsement area) will provide his or her name and contact information online before being instantly given access to that web-based information.

The new certification system should also improve SDE's ability to check for public safety hazards. The system should store and run background checks of up to three former names, making it less likely that someone who has been convicted but has had several name changes will erroneously not show up on the background check.

Additional functionalities originally were proposed for the new certification system but were excluded due to cost. The proposed functions would have enabled Connecticut school districts and teacher preparation programs to submit applications online for their prospective teachers, higher education institutions directly to scan in transcripts, and the certification unit's manager to monitor analyst workloads.

The program review committee recommends the State Department of Education consider providing the resources necessary to give the certification unit manager the ability to monitor certification analysts' workloads using the new certification system.

Giving the unit manager the ability to frequently monitor the progress analysts are making and track how long it takes for applications to be processed is one step toward more effective, ongoing oversight of the certification unit. This recommendation would enable the unit manager to adjust workloads more easily, assess analyst efficiency, and evaluate whether the processing goal of four to six weeks to certification is being met. Allocating funds in this way would help remedy the problem of limited oversight, as discussed later. Funding the other initially proposed functions would serve to make the application process more convenient, although the process currently is not unduly burdensome.

Protecting the Public

Appeals to certification decisions. The State Board of Education is authorized by statute to issue, deny, and revoke certificates through SDE. The educator may appeal a denial or revocation through specific processes. If the educator is dissatisfied with the final decision, an appeal may be filed with Superior Court.¹⁰³ Data on the numbers of applications evaluated by the department for conviction or potential misconduct problems and of certificate revocations due to convictions are found in Appendix M.

The certification unit has in place a process to detect and determine whether criminal convictions (or other misconduct) merit withholding certification – of both applicants and certified educators – that appears thorough and organized. The process is described in part above, and also in the following text.

Denial. Certification regulations detail and Figure III-2 below shows the process an applicant follows to appeal the denial decision.¹⁰⁴ The process is open only to someone who has

¹⁰³ C.G.S. Sec. 10-145b(n)

¹⁰⁴ R.C.S.A. Sec. 10-145d-611

been denied a certificate; a district cannot appeal a denial of its request for a permit or authorization. An individual whose application is denied after going through the appeal process may re-apply for certification whenever desired. There currently is no limit on the number of times a person may apply for certification.

Standard revocation. An educator’s certificate, permit, or authorization may be revoked for the following reasons:

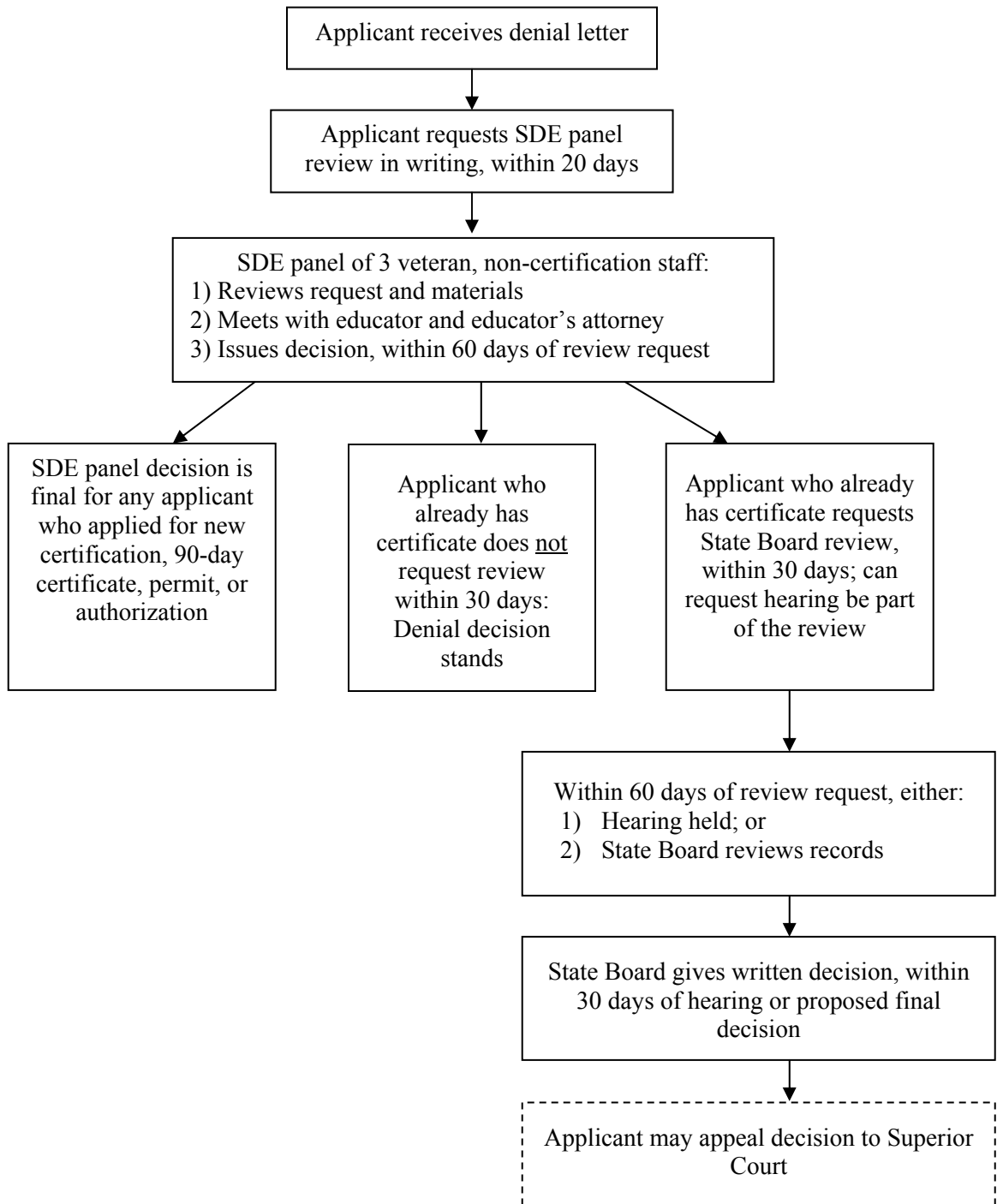
- fraud or misrepresentation of fact on the application;
- persistent neglect to perform duties as authorized by certificate;
- professionally unfit to perform those duties;
- court conviction for a crime “involving moral turpitude” or for any other crime that the State Board of Education believes would demean the value of a certificate;
- intentionally breached security on a statewide examination; or
- other due and sufficient cause.

The State Board of Education is responsible for establishing that “a preponderance of the evidence” indicates one of the above revocation reasons is present.¹⁰⁵ The regulations prescribe a process for these standard revocations, which is summarized in Figure III-3.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁵ C.G.S. Sec. 10-145b(m)(1)

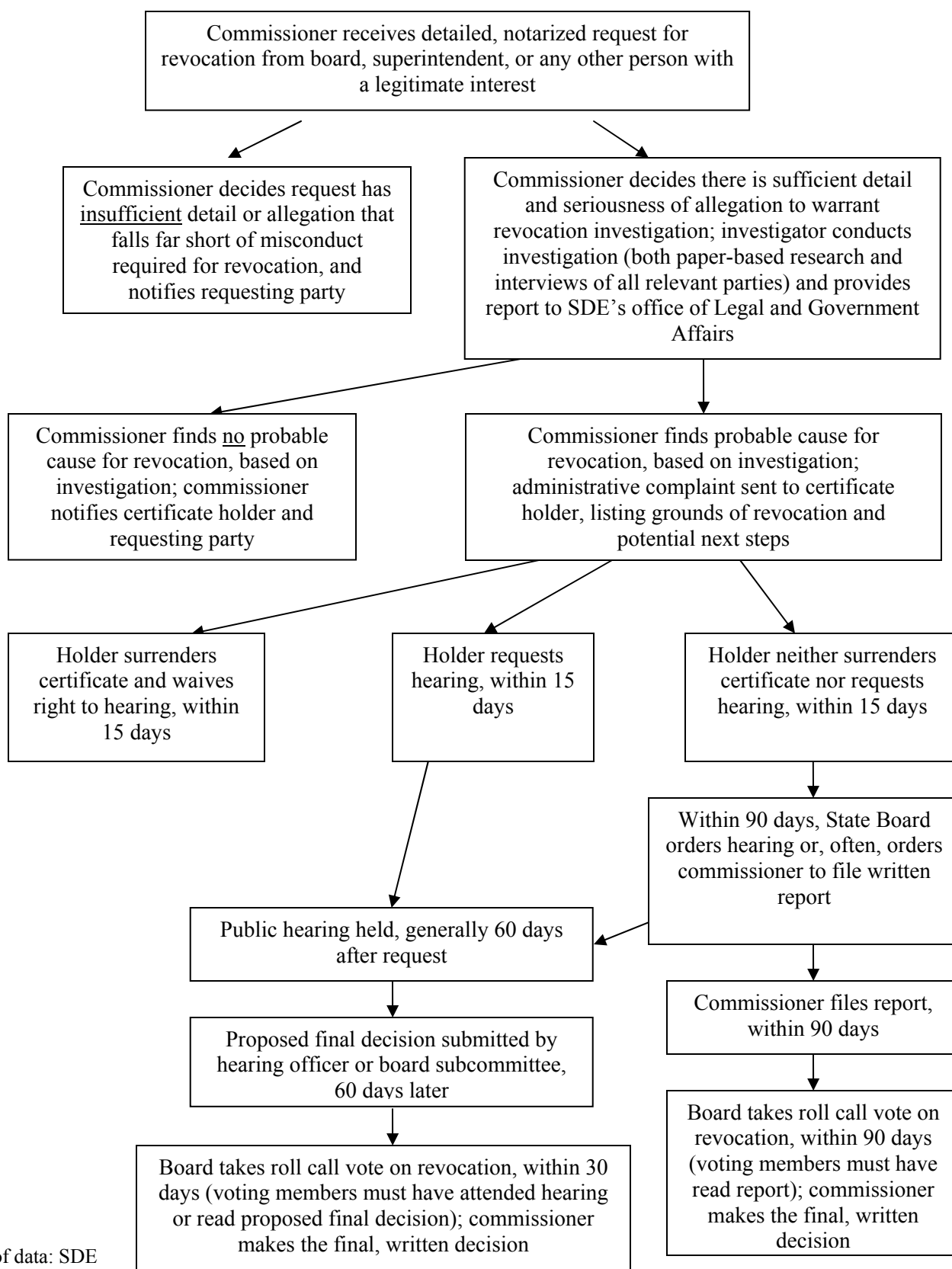
¹⁰⁶ R.C.S.A. Sec. 10-145d-612 and R.C.S.A. Sec. 10-145d-613

Figure III-2. Denial Appeals Process



Source of data: SDE

Figure III-3. Standard Certificate Revocation Process



Source of data: SDE

Automatic revocation. An educator who has been convicted of certain crimes, including child abuse or neglect and certain felonies, is stripped of the certificate when the commissioner is notified of the conviction.¹⁰⁷ The commissioner is required to be notified in writing by the local state's attorney when an educator holding certification is penalized for failing to report reasonable cause for suspicion that a child has been abused, neglected, or injured,¹⁰⁸ or is convicted of the following crimes: any felony; child abuse; sexual assault against a child; or risk of injury to or impairing the morals of a child.¹⁰⁹

Upon receiving notice of the educator's conviction, the commissioner informs the educator of the revocation by letter. The educator may choose to initiate the reinstatement process described below.

1. Request for reinstatement is sent. The former certificate holder may file such request with the State Board within 15 days of receiving notification of the revocation. The request must include a detailed explanation of why reinstatement should be performed and any other relevant information. A copy is sent to the commissioner.

2. Commissioner responds. The commissioner issues a statement to the board for or against reinstatement within 15 days of receiving the reinstatement request. A copy of the statement is sent to the educator.

3. Board reviews case and commissioner issues decision. The board evaluates the request for reinstatement and the commissioner's statement and recommends whether to grant the request, within 90 days. Several factors are considered: "the nature of the crime; the exemplary status of a certificate holder; the crime and its relationship to the education profession; the effect the crime has on the public health, safety, and welfare, and whether, in the opinion of the board, reinstatement impairs the standing of other certificates issued by the board."¹¹⁰ The commissioner considers the board's recommendation and issues the final decision.

Other efforts. To assist districts from knowingly hiring educators who could do or have done harm, SDE annually sends to each district (including charter schools and state facilities) a list of all applicants whose certificate requests have ever been denied and all educators whose certificates have ever been revoked. The program review committee suggests the department annually send the list to private schools, to ensure private schools can make more informed hiring decisions and thereby protect their students from potential harm.

The department's legislative package to be presented in spring 2009 likely will include a provision to require school districts to report to the department the name of any certified educator dismissed for cause (e.g., misconduct). The department will use this information to

¹⁰⁷ The convictions that result in automatic revocation are: capital felony, arson murder, class A felony, class B felonies excepting certain crimes (first degree larceny, first degree computer crime, and vendor fraud), child abuse or neglect, and certain child care, civil or personal rights, assault, sex, weapons, and drug crimes that are listed in Appendix N. (C.G.S. Sec. 10-145b(m)(2))

¹⁰⁸ C.G.S. Sec. 10-149a

¹⁰⁹ C.G.S. Sec. 17a-101i(c)

¹¹⁰ R.C.S.A. Sec. 10-145d-612a

determine whether certification should be revoked, an investigation should be undertaken, or certification should be re-examined upon the educator's next application. Currently, there is no such requirement, so an educator who has been fired for misconduct and whose certificate is not soon expiring would not be detected and could seek a position in another district. Interviews held during this study revealed that in such cases, the former district often is reluctant to fully disclose the misconduct to the future district and consequently the person is re-hired. This practice could pose a threat to the safety of Connecticut public school children and will be ended if the legislation is passed and compliance is effectively monitored by SDE.¹¹¹

The program review committee recommends C.G.S. Sec. 10-145b(m) be amended to require local and regional boards of education to report to the Commissioner of Education the name of any certified employee dismissed for misconduct.

The commissioner's office could use the information to launch an investigation of whether the educator's certificate should be revoked, following the procedures for standard revocation requests set forth in the education regulations. In this way, educators who have been fired for misconduct meriting certificate revocation would no longer be authorized to teach in any Connecticut position that requires certification.

OVERSIGHT OF CONTINUING EDUCATION UNIT (CEU) PROVIDERS

Continuing education units (necessary for continuing the professional certificate) may be granted by the approximately 300 organizations SDE has approved and by all school districts. Only businesses or organizations – not individuals – may be approved as providers. Prospective providers first must submit a formal application to SDE. The application mainly describes the content of each CEU course. Curriculum specialists within the department review the course descriptions to make sure they align with the state's standards for particular subject areas. If a provider's program is rejected, SDE sends the applicant recommendations on how to improve the course offering. The applicant may submit a revised application for review.

An approved provider that adds a CEU activity is supposed to inform the department via a form that asks for a brief description of learning outcomes and potential effect on student learning, but there is no formal SDE review of the new offering. The department's website lists approved CEU providers and their telephone numbers, but educators must directly contact CEU providers to learn about specific continuing education offerings.

Although SDE reviews and approves the content of prospective continuing education courses before granting an organization permission to become a CEU provider, the certification unit's re-approval of those providers does not consider the quality of continuing education that has been delivered. To obtain re-approval, a provider needs to submit only basic information on CEU activities (e.g., titles of courses offered, modifications to courses) every six months, even if no courses were offered over the previous six months.

¹¹¹ Private school employees and employment practices are not regulated by SDE. Consequently, private schools may hire uncertified teachers and would not be subject to any law regarding reporting dismissals for cause to the department.

If SDE does not receive the required reports from a provider for any consecutive two reporting periods, the provider loses its approved status. SDE does this automatically; there is no formal request by the department for any outstanding materials. If this happens, and the provider wants to continue providing continuing education courses, the provider will have to go through the application process again, as if it were applying for initial approval.

State law allows districts to be CEU providers without any review by the education department.¹¹² Districts may issue CEUs for whatever activities they wish and can choose any person or organization to lead the activities. SDE does not approve either the activities or the leader either prospectively or retroactively. Districts are required to offer 18 hours of free CEU activities annually, which totals 90 hours over five years, the amount an educator currently must obtain to earn a continued professional certificate.

The law also provides some guidance to districts on CEU expectations. First, the district is to have a comprehensive professional development plan that includes evaluation and improvement of the activities.¹¹³ Second, the professional development offerings under the plan are to be developed with input from teachers.¹¹⁴ Third, the district is to be prepared to attest to SDE that CEU activities are assessed for effectiveness and aimed at reaching school or district goals.¹¹⁵

Each year in its application for state education funding, a district must attest that it has fulfilled all statutory responsibilities and requirements, but there is no consistent, systematic follow-up to ensure any of the continuing education statutory requirements were met. Data from the committee surveys (as discussed more fully in Chapter IV) offer some understanding into whether districts are meeting their CEU offering requirements. Most districts appear to be fulfilling the responsibility to offer 18 hours of continuing education: the vast majority (93 percent) of educator survey respondents who hold a continued professional certificate either believed their districts offer the required 18 hours of CEU activities annually or was not sure.

Districts might fall short of compliance with the other continuing education requirements, however. Nearly one-third (30 percent) of district survey respondents indicated teachers have not been involved at all in determining professional development offerings, which is a statutory obligation.

The program review committee recommends the State Department of Education periodically remind districts that Connecticut law requires professional development offerings be developed with the input of teachers.

The department requires districts and approved providers to collect and retain teacher evaluations of CEU activities but does not ask them to share the data or adjust CEU activity content based on the evaluations. Policies set forth in department documents state that each CEU provider is supposed to collect and keep for 15 years participant evaluations of whether the

¹¹² C.G.S. Sec. 10-145b(1)(1)(D). Districts may also arrange to award their employees CEUs from continuing education activities at RESCs or other districts, instead of providing the activities in-district.

¹¹³ C.G.S. Sec. 10-220a(b)

¹¹⁴ C.G.S. Sec. 10-245b(1)(1)

¹¹⁵ C.G.S. Sec. 10-145b(1)(2)

activity allowed them to acquire knowledge, skills, and abilities toward improving student learning.¹¹⁶ It is unclear whether all providers collect the information because the department does not require any providers to submit evaluations for review.

Overall, the certification unit conducts some limited oversight of non-district CEU providers and effectively no oversight of district providers. The program review committee recognizes that while both types of providers are supposed to be collecting participant evaluation data, SDE does not ask for this data in an effort to evaluate providers and improve continuing education. More comprehensive, consistent department oversight likely would improve the relevance and effectiveness of CEUs, but probably would require substantial staff resources not currently available. The proposed new professional development system described in Chapter I aims to improve the quality of professional development by providing guidelines for which types of activities teachers may earn re-certification credit, in lieu of focusing on a costly oversight effort.

OUTREACH ON CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

The certification unit undertakes limited efforts to inform prospective, new, and current educators of what must be done to obtain and retain the state certification necessary for public school employment. Other outreach efforts clarify what district personnel must do and know to make sure employees are properly certified for the positions held, as required by law.

The certification unit has conducted some outreach to prospective and new educators, as well as to districts, but reports being recently constrained in its outreach efforts by resource levels. Outreach mainly is conducted when an organization requests it.

Certification staff over the last couple of years have made presentations to students at a few high schools upon the schools' requests and been available to the public at a handful of job fairs. The unit used to send staff to more job fairs but found participants wanted either general information accessible on the Internet or coursework evaluations that could not be performed on site. Consequently, the certification unit narrowed its efforts to job fairs focused on targeting SDE's priority recruitment populations: minority group members, military personnel, and prospective urban district teachers.

Unit staff makes presentations on certification requirements at least annually to teacher candidates in about half of Connecticut's teacher preparation programs. The department reports that all in-state programs know staff is willing to present; SDE does so when invited. Such presentations generally cover the different levels of certification, the requirements necessary to become certified, how to apply for certification, and how to renew certification. A version of the presentation is posted on the department's website, accessible to anyone.

The unit takes two steps to ensure certified educators are properly informed of certification requirements. First, each educator who receives a new certificate is sent notice of the requirements to advance or retain certification. Second, six months before the educator's certificate expires, a letter is sent as a reminder to re-apply for certification. The new

¹¹⁶ *CEU Procedures Manual*, SDE, January 2001. Also: *Connecticut Guidelines for the Issuance of Continuing Education Units Required for Certification*, SDE, September 1999.

certification system will allow the reminder to be sent via e-mail, a change that likely will save the department money and time. It is also possible the e-mail reminder will more often reach its recipient: the department estimates 30 percent of mailed reminders are returned due to outdated addresses.

Certification staff also conducts workshops open to district personnel involved in hiring efforts. The department reports it encourages principals to attend, since they are the group most likely to lead recruitment and hiring efforts, but few do, possibly because of time constraints. The unit formerly gave one workshop annually at three locations around the state until the effort was stopped last year due to a lack of staff resources, according to SDE. One workshop at a single location was held this fall, but the department reports demand was far higher than the 140-participant capacity. During the workshops, SDE occasionally has offered to give presentations to individual districts, but the offer has not been given in a systematic way to all districts, and few have taken advantage of it. In addition to the workshops, SDE presents on the importance of hiring only certified educators and on the certification compliance process (explained in Chapter II of this report) as part of the Teachers' Retirement Board's annual workshop to instruct district personnel on how to properly enter and send data for teacher retirement purposes.

MANAGEMENT OVERSIGHT

There is little oversight conducted of certification output and staff at the unit level, and none at the broader division level within the department. At the unit level, the quantity of certifications, permits, and authorizations produced per analyst seems to be one of the only outcomes that is consistently measured and reviewed. Other key aspects of performance are not formally assessed, including the quality of application reviews and the quality and quantity of CEU audits.

The certification unit is part of the SDE Division of Teaching, Learning and Instructional Leadership. At the division level, no specific or general expectations have been set for the certification unit regarding application processing, customer service, monitoring whether districts have hired only certified educators, or any other key task. The lack of division-level oversight appears to have existed for many years. Recent turnover left open for about one year the associate commissioner position that oversees the division. An educator new to the department recently has filled the vacancy.

The program review committee recommends the State Department of Education more effectively oversee certification at both the unit and division levels. This includes developing performance measures and objectives of key functions within the unit and monitoring the unit's performance based on those measures and objectives.

ORGANIZATION AND RESOURCES

The State Department of Education's Bureau of Educator Standards and Certification administers teacher certification, the BEST program, teacher preparation program approval, and educator certification tests. The Teacher Certification Unit, within the bureau, has two main

functions: administering teacher certification and accrediting teacher preparation programs.¹¹⁷ To administer teacher certification, the unit is responsible for reviewing certification applications, issuing certificates, responding to questions from teachers and school districts, and completing other related assignments described in this report. An overview of the staffing, revenue and expenditures, and output compared to resources for teacher certification operations follows.

Staffing

The department's Teacher Certification Unit has three types of staff, each with different duties. First, the manager, who is also the Bureau chief, oversees certification policies, procedures, and staff. Second, certification analysts review and audit certification applications, determine whether certification should be granted, and respond to questions from those who contact the department about certification. Third, administrative support staff process certification paperwork, including inputting data to the electronic teacher certification database.

Most staff members are certification analysts. Each analyst is assigned a caseload that includes at least one of the following:

- teacher preparation programs: all applications for initial certification from the graduates of particular Connecticut programs;
- specific types of teaching authorization or permit: all applications in a special category (e.g., Durational Shortage Area Permits); and
- sections of the alphabet: applications for provisional certification or new professional certification from Connecticut teachers and all applications from out-of-state teachers, whose last names begin with certain letters.

Several analysts have small caseloads compared to their colleagues because they spend more time on special duties. These duties include working with teacher preparation programs and fulfilling federal teacher preparation and certification reporting requirements, responding to districts' certification questions, overseeing continuing education providers, and managing the certification database.

New certification analysts are trained by their experienced colleagues each day over a several-month period when hired. The training, which is guided by a lengthy manual, covers routes to certification, many particular areas of certificates (e.g., cross endorsements, denials of certificates, and coaching), customer service, and orientation to the office, SDE, and the Regional Educational Service Centers.

¹¹⁷ One certification unit staff member has duties that concern both teacher preparation programs and teacher certification. The person does not directly work on preparation program accreditation, and thus is included in the teacher certification section staff description.

Revenue

The certification unit generates more than \$2 million annually in application and certificate fees, according to SDE. For state fiscal years 2006 and 2007, \$2.14 and \$2.18 million were generated, respectively. This revenue goes directly into the state General Fund.

Expenditures

Certification operations are funded by the state General Fund and federal program grants. Expenditures on certification are expected to reach about \$1.9 million for FY 2008. The state is bearing about 80 percent of the cost (approximately \$1.6 million), with the federal government covering the remainder.

Most certification operations staff are funded through SDE's personal services budget. Connecticut also receives funding for certification through two federal program grants, Title II Part A: Teacher and Principal Training and Recruitment, and Title VI: Innovative Program Strategies.¹¹⁸ Table III-3 shows certification unit expenditures for the current and last fiscal years as of May 2008.

Table III-3. Teacher Certification Unit Operations Expenditures and Revenue for FYs 2007 and 2008¹		
	<i>FY 2008²</i>	<i>FY 2007</i>
Total Certification Unit Expenditures	\$1,918,455	\$1,794,193
Total Certification Unit Revenue (from fees)	Not available	~\$2,180,000
State General Fund		
Personal Services	\$1,499,109	\$1,360,730
Office Supplies	\$75,281	\$73,390
Total Expenditures	\$1,574,390	\$1,434,121
Percent of All Certification Expenditures	82%	80%
Federal Sources for Certification Unit Expenditures		
Title II Part A	\$279,398	\$249,221
Title VI	\$64,667	\$110,851
Total Expenditures	\$344,065	\$360,072
Percent of All Certification Unit Expenditures	18%	20%
¹ Excludes staff assigned to the BEST program, test development, and approval of teacher preparation programs. ² Projected, based on expenditures as of May 1, 2008. Source of data: SDE		

¹¹⁸ P.L. 107-110

The unit manager (who is also a bureau chief) has little control over expenditures. The manager may request new projects or resources but any such requests must be approved by the department's budget division. The department manages the budget and staff resources of the certification unit's bureau as it does with others; this top-down approach gives the bureau chief minimal control over those resources. The bureau chief does not develop a formal fiscal plan.

General Output Measures

The amounts of certificate materials handled and staff who work on issuing certification have remained about the same over the past three fiscal years. Table III-4 shows that the number of certificates, permits, and authorizations issued stayed nearly constant, around 22,500, while the amount of applications increased slightly, to nearly 25,000 in FY08. (There is a discrepancy between the numbers of applications received and certificates issued because some applications are incomplete or fall short of meeting the certificate requirements.) The program review committee recognizes that the certification unit completes additional tasks and that other aspects of performance (e.g., how quickly complete applications were processed) also are not included in these measures, but this information is given because it is the only output data consistently tracked by the unit. By these measures, the certification processing workload of the certification unit has been stable.

Table III-4. Applications Received and Certificates Issued: FYs 06 through 08				
	<i>FY06</i>	<i>FY07</i>	<i>FY08</i>	<i>Change from FY06 to FY08</i>
Applications received	24,230	24,328	24,945	3.0%
Certificates issued	22,564	22,513	22,448	-0.5%
Source of data: SDE				

The number of administrative staff increased somewhat, but the analyst staff, which determines whether certification should be issued, contracted slightly over the three-year period analyzed, as depicted in Table III-5. The change in staffing levels was due mainly to the need for increasing the teacher preparation program approval analyst staff to two persons, which meant moving a certification analyst to the program approval function within the unit. That move caused subsequent shifting of other personnel.

Over the past three years, then, a decreasing number of full-time equivalent certification analysts has been evaluating an increasing number of applications. The higher workload for analysts appears not to have resulted in unreasonable slow application processing, based on analysis provided earlier and the survey respondents' high level of satisfaction with the processing timeframe (detailed in Chapter IV).

Table III-5. Full-time Equivalent Certification Unit Staff: FYs 06 through 08*				
	<i>FY06</i>	<i>FY07</i>	<i>FY08</i>	<i>Change from FY06 to FY08</i>
Administrative staff	5.0	5.3	6.1	22.6%
Analyst staff	14.0	13.2	12.0	-7.4%
<p>*Only staff members who work on processing and reviewing certification applications are included. Those who were assigned to teacher preparation program approval (two full-time analysts), developing teacher certification regulations (one analyst), investigations of revocation requests (one investigator in FY08), and oversight (one unit manager) were excluded since they did not contribute to the unit's "output" of applications received and certificates issued. The number of full-time equivalent staff is presented as rounded but was not rounded to compute the "Change from FY06 to FY08" column.</p> <p>Source of data: SDE</p>				

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Chapter IV: Customer Service

A final component of this study was to assess the Teacher Certification Unit's overall responsiveness to its customers. The unit responds to questions and information requests from the general public and school districts regarding educator certification in various ways. Specifically, the unit responds to inquiries via: 1) a live phone system staffed by the unit's certification analysts; 2) an automated telephone system available to those applying for certification or educators who are already certified; 3) electronic e-mail responses; 4) a website containing information about Connecticut's educator certification requirements and process; 5) assisting people when they visit the certification office; and 6) various outreach efforts.

To gain an understanding of how educators and districts – as the certification unit's main customers – perceive the overall level of customer service provided by the unit, program review committee staff surveyed a randomly selected group of educators that had contact with the certification unit over the past year, as well as human resource directors from each local and regional school district in the state. Questions on the surveys reflected key topic areas for each group, and the survey responses were anonymous. Copies of the surveys are found in Appendix A, along with information about the survey methodologies and a summary of descriptive information about the respondents. The survey results from educators and school districts regarding customer service are discussed below.

EDUCATORS

The certification unit is responsible for responding to and assisting past, current, and prospective educators. The unit handles questions, information requests, and certification application materials from thousands of educators during the course of a year. As such, educators account for the bulk of the certification unit's customer base.

The survey solicited information about educators' experiences with the certification unit from a customer service perspective. Of the 1,521 educators who were mailed surveys, 428 (28 percent) responded. Most of the questions asked educators to rate their level of satisfaction regarding specific services provided by the unit. Committee staff identified the following four key service components of the certification unit:

- phone (i.e., ability to speak with a certification analyst during the unit's designated times);
- e-mail;
- websites (SDE maintains two websites containing information about state certification); and
- regular mail service (interaction with the unit to obtain information, excluding submitting application forms).

It should be noted that the survey results presented are only for those respondents who actually rated the service and had used the service within the past year. The one-year timeframe was used to provide survey respondents with a period long enough to have used the unit's

services and short enough to accurately recall their satisfaction with the services. It was determined this timeframe would produce more current and relevant survey responses.

Overall Satisfaction

Survey recipients were asked to rate their *overall satisfaction* with the certification unit's service in each of the four service areas noted above. Educators gave their satisfaction levels for each of these services using a four-part rating scale, ranging from "very satisfied" to "very dissatisfied." Table IV-1 shows the results of the survey responses.

Table IV-1. Overall Satisfaction with Certification Unit Services: Educators				
<i>Service*</i>	<i>Very Satisfied</i>	<i>Satisfied</i>	<i>Dissatisfied</i>	<i>Very Dissatisfied</i>
Phone (n=239)	43%	38%	13%	6%
E-mail (n=192)	32%	47%	13%	7%
Websites (n=335)	27%	59%	13%	2%
Regular mail (n=182)	39%	51%	8%	2%
*Each service either had missing responses or responses indicating the service was not used, which account for the differences in the number of responses analyzed. Source: PRI survey				

The overall satisfaction levels among educators for the services provided by the certification unit were high. For each of the four service components, respondents answered they were either "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the service they received at the following rates: phone (81 percent); e-mail (79 percent); websites (86 percent); and regular mail (90 percent). The survey results show a consistently high level of satisfaction among educators for each of the services provided by the certification unit.

Timeliness

Two specific survey questions focused on the timeliness of the certification unit's phone and e-mail services. First, educators were asked ideally how long it should take to speak with "a person knowledgeable about certification" during the unit's designated calling times¹¹⁹ and whether or not their expectation was met when they called the unit over the past year. Second, educators were asked a similar question about the expected and actual response times they experienced using the unit's e-mail service. Educators were also asked to rate the certification unit's overall timeliness in processing applications, as discussed earlier in Chapter I.

Phone service. The certification unit offers live phone service for answering general questions about Connecticut's certification requirements and application process. Automated

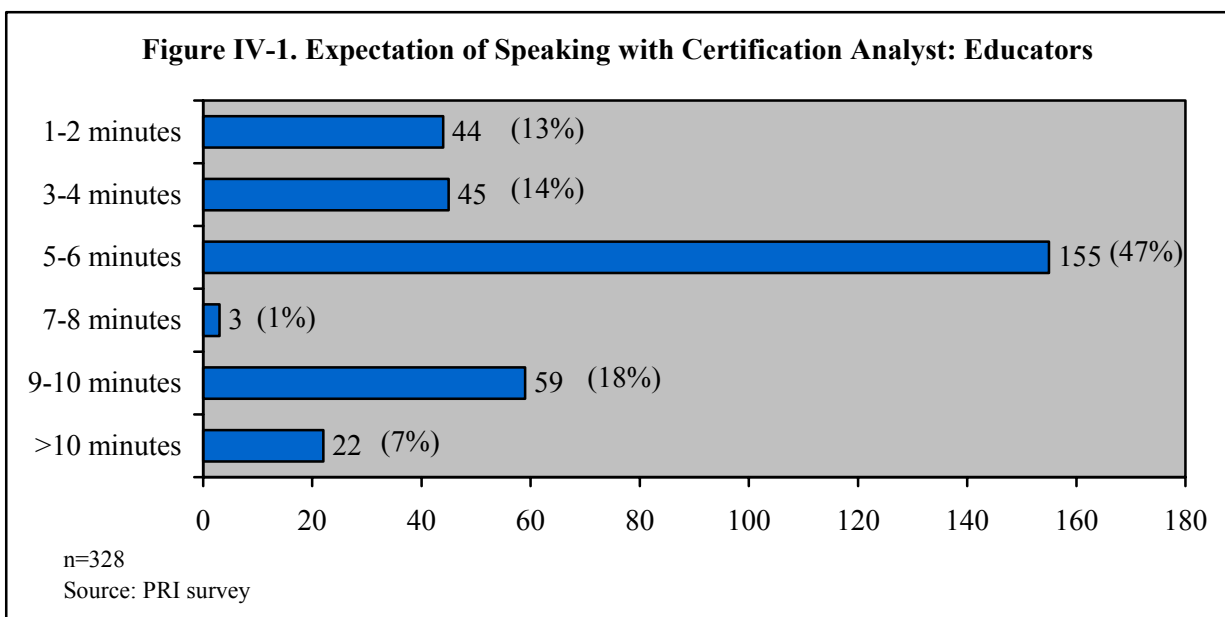
¹¹⁹ The certification unit has specific hours during the week open for the public to call and speak directly with one of the several certification analysts staffing the phone lines during those hours. Analysts are available to answer calls via the designated phone lines on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays from noon to 4:00 p.m.

phone service is also available to candidates with pending certification applications and those educators already certified. The unit does not offer voicemail or give out detailed information over the phone if any question is deemed complex, because it would rather have requests in writing to establish a formal record and avoid any miscommunication.

Certification analysts staff the phone lines four days per week from noon to 4:00 p.m. For two days each week, five analysts have phone duty, while six analysts are available the other two days. There is a rotation schedule among the analysts to ensure a balanced distribution of phone coverage. Multiple analysts staff the phones each day and their hours are staggered. At any given time, there are at least four analysts available to answer calls, including substitutes when necessary.

According to the department, an analyst who is serving on phone duty cannot simultaneously work on other tasks, such as processing application, due to call volume. Phone coverage used to be available eight hours a day, five days a week. SDE notes that phone service was shortened to four days in the mid-1990s to give certification analysts more time to process certification applications in order to alleviate an increasing backlog of applications at that time.

Figure IV-1 illustrates how educators responded to the committee's survey questions when asked ideally how long it should take before they speak with someone knowledgeable about certification when they call during designated calling times. *Almost three-quarters said they should be able to speak with someone within six minutes or less, while 93 percent responded within 10 minutes.* Although not shown in the figure, 74 percent of respondents indicated these time expectations were met when they called the unit.



Wait times may vary widely depending on multiple factors, including the volume of calls received at the same time. When contacted by committee staff, the surrounding states of Massachusetts and New York indicated callers typically have to wait before their calls are

answered by certification staff.¹²⁰ For example, the average wait time (across the whole day) to speak with an analyst in Massachusetts is just over two minutes, although it was noted that wait times indeed vary and can be as long as 15-20 minutes during periods of heavy call volume. New York simply mentioned there is always a wait for callers given daily call volume.

To further gauge the level of phone service provided by the unit, actual call data from the certification unit for January through August 2008¹²¹ was obtained. The information was specific to the phone lines open to the general public staffed by certification analysts, and included: total calls received per day; length of wait time; and length of talk time between the analyst and the caller. Table IV-2 summarizes the call information.

Even though the certification unit does not have a specific standard for how long someone should be placed on hold before speaking with a certification analyst during the designated calling hours, it is clear from the information in Table IV-2 that the average length of time callers remain on hold (1 minute 30 seconds) is well within the range they expect, as presented in Figure IV-1. As such, the program review committee concludes that *the timeliness of the certification unit's phone service is satisfactory and meets the public's needs*. It should be noted the certification unit also offers a 24-hour automated phone system allowing educators to receive updated information on certification status or to request information, which was not included in the above analysis because the system is instantly accessible.

Table IV-2. Certification Unit Dedicated Phone-Line Volume: January – August 2008			
<i>Month</i>	<i>Calls Received (monthly)</i>	<i>Caller Hold Time (minutes)</i>	<i>Minutes Spent with Caller</i>
Range	1,910 -- 2,643	1:04 -- 2:12	3:34 -- 3:59
Average	2,098	1:30	3:43
Total	18,506	NA	NA
Source of data: SDE			

In addition to phone service questions on the survey discussed above, educators were asked whether, if they were to choose, the certification unit should maintain its live phone service staffed by certification analysts or use the analysts' time to process applications and respond to e-mail. *Of the 404 educators responding to the question, almost three-fourths (72 percent) said they would choose to keep the live phone service.* This is an indication the general educator public sees a definite benefit in being able to speak with a certification analyst to resolve questions.

E-mail service. E-mail has become a highly-used means of communication within the certification unit, both for its expediency and for producing a written record of discussions with educators, districts, and the public at large. E-mails may be submitted directly to the certification

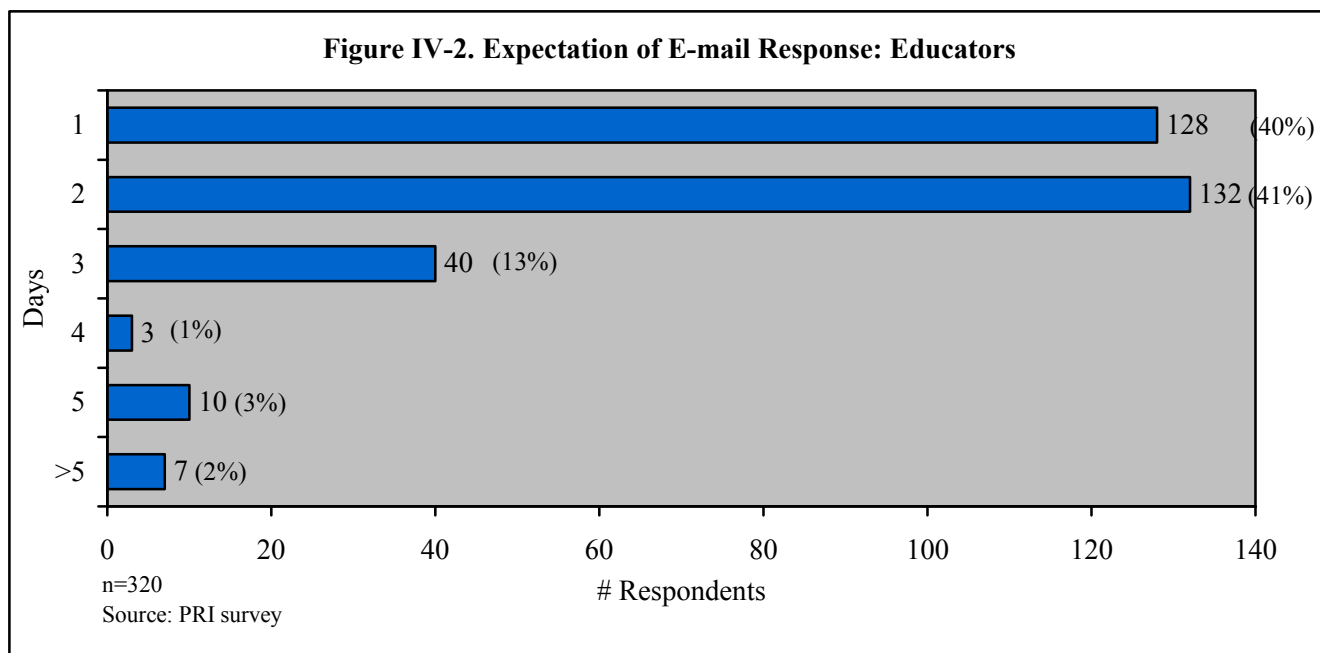
¹²⁰ Rhode Island does not have phone service.

¹²¹ Data for previous months were not stored by the department.

unit using a designated e-mail address. The e-mails received by the unit are reviewed by administrative staff and then forwarded to the appropriate certification analyst for attention each day.

The unit's standard for responding to e-mail requests is indicated on the main certification website.¹²² During the normal volume times of October through April, the standard is 5-7 business days. The website notes this standard could double during times of heavier volume, typically experienced May through September.

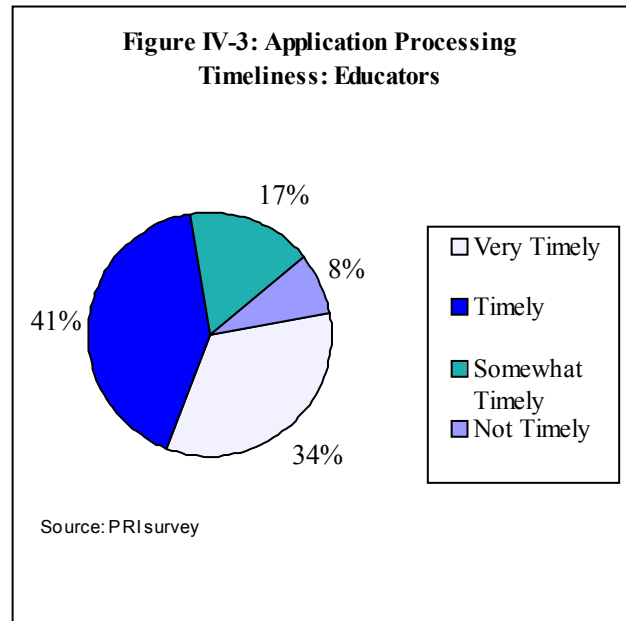
As Figure IV-2 illustrates, 81 percent of surveyed educators indicated they expected the certification unit to reply to an e-mail request within two days, while an additional 13 percent had an expected time of within three days. Although not shown in the figure, the survey also revealed 71 percent of educators indicated their time expectations were met when they e-mailed the unit.



It is difficult to fully determine whether the unit's standard for responding to outside e-mails is achieved because response times are not formally tracked by the unit. Based on the survey results, though, a majority of educators was satisfied with the unit's e-mail response times over the past year. The unit estimates about 45 new e-mails arrive each day and are distributed to certification analysts.

¹²² <http://www.ctcert.org/certprocess.html>

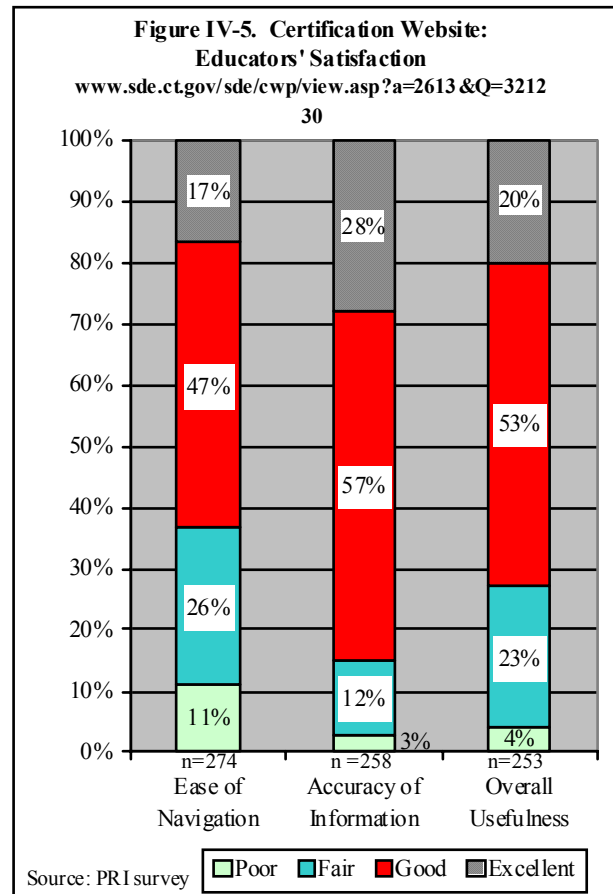
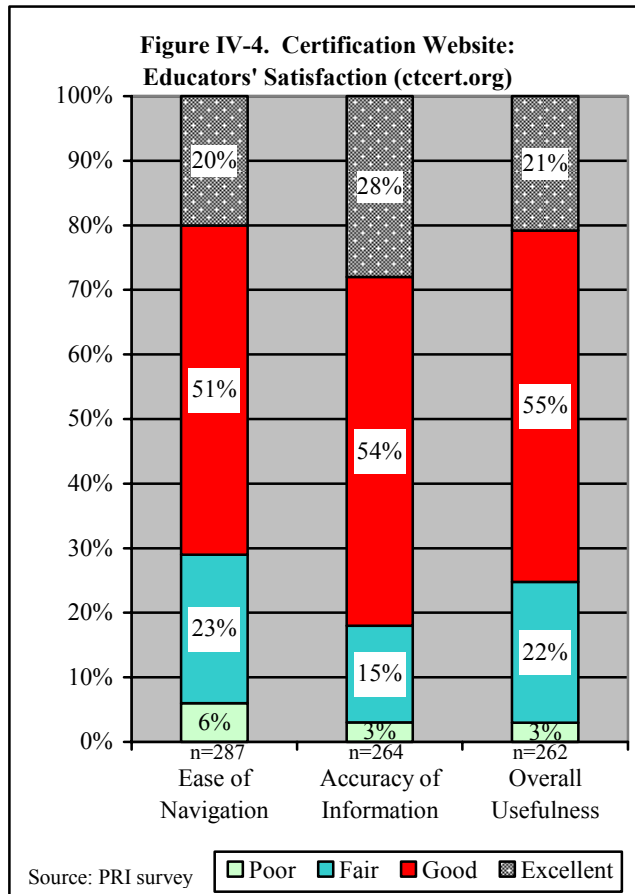
Application processing. As discussed in Chapter I, a central function of the certification unit is processing applications for certification. Educators were queried to determine their satisfaction level with the unit's speed in processing applications. Figure IV-3 shows *92 percent rated the unit's application review process timely*. The survey results indicate a high level of satisfaction among educators with how quickly their applications were processed by the certification unit. (Although the rating "somewhat timely" could be interpreted as an educator rating the timeliness either positively or negatively, this rating was construed as an indication the educator thought the process was timely to a degree.)



Websites

SDE maintains two websites that provide certification information. The first site (www.ctcert.org) serves as the public's main portal to information about Connecticut's certification process and requirements for educators. The second site (www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2613&Q=321230) is actually the homepage for the SDE Bureau of Educator Preparation and Certification, accessible through the department's main website. The bureau's site offers similar information to that found on the main certification site, while including additional information about certification, professional development requirements, teacher preparation programs, and processes on becoming a certified teacher in Connecticut. Each site links to the other.

Given two separate websites exist within SDE to provide educator certification information to the public, the PRI survey queried educators on both sites. Questions about each website's "ease of navigation," "accuracy of information," and "overall usefulness" were included in the survey. The results for the www.ctcert.org site are highlighted below in Figure IV-4, while results for the bureau's homepage are shown in Figure IV-5.



The figures show there was general consistency among educators responding to the survey questions about the certification websites, with most rating the sites favorably. Over 70 percent of the respondents rated the sites either “excellent” or “good” for each of the components, including “overall usefulness.” The only category not rated as excellent or good by at least 70 of the respondents was the “ease of navigation” component of the bureau’s homepage (64 percent). Although www.ctcert.org is considered by many as the primary state website for educator certification, the bureau’s site provides important information that should be accessible by the general public as easily as possible.

Committee staff frequently used the two sites over the course of this study to help understand the certification process and collect information. Although the sites received generally good ratings from educators in the survey, they could be improved, particularly the bureau’s site. This site contains useful information, yet some of the information was outdated and the site generally was difficult to navigate, which is consistent with the survey results. The bureau is aware improvements are necessary, as noted in discussions with committee staff. However, the technical personnel within the certification unit and department who would help design a more user-friendly bureau website have been heavily involved with the development and planned implementation of the unit’s new certification system. The committee understands the finite resources available for technical purposes, including website development. As such, the bureau and the department are encouraged, at the conclusion of the certification system project, to review and make the necessary improvements to the certification websites to increase the sites’

navigability and make the sites' information comprehensive and current. These changes will improve the unit's overall level of customer service to the public.

Service Thoroughness and Consistency

Educators were asked to rate the thoroughness and consistency of the information they received from the certification unit. The survey solicited responses for each service component used (i.e., phone, e-mail, etc.). "Thoroughness" was considered to mean the information received adequately answered educators' questions or met their information needs, and "consistency" was considered to mean every time a method was used, the information received was consistent. Table IV-3 shows the results.

Table IV-3. Service Thoroughness and Consistency: Educators				
<i>Service</i>	<i>Both Thorough, Consistent</i>	<i>Thorough, Not Consistent</i>	<i>Consistent, Not Thorough</i>	<i>Neither Thorough nor Consistent</i>
Phone (n=233)	72%	13%	7%	8%
E-Mail (n=179)	69%	11%	8%	11%
Websites (n=309)	62%	9%	23%	7%
Regular Mail (n=170)	75%	6%	8%	11%
Source of data: PRI survey				

Educators, for the most part, found the information received from the certification unit via the four service components to be both thorough and consistent. The only anomaly in the responses is the overall lag of the websites: 30 percent of the respondents indicated the information on the websites was either consistent but not thorough, or neither. Otherwise, *generally 7 out of 10 educators rated the information received from the unit as thorough and consistent*, comparable to educator responses to other customer service questions on the survey.

SCHOOL DISTRICTS

A second key customer group of the certification unit is school districts, specifically, human resources directors within districts. Human resources personnel typically have the most contact with the SDE certification unit.

District directors were asked somewhat similar survey questions as asked of educators, with additional questions when necessary. The survey questions covered four topics: 1) customer service; 2) compliance with certification requirements; 3) continuing education; and 4) other. The following discussion focuses on the district responses regarding the unit's customer service; survey results from the other topics covered by the survey (e.g., continuing education) are included in other parts of this report. Of the 171 surveys mailed, 116 districts (68 percent) responded. As with the educator survey, the information presented below is only for those who responded to both the survey and rated the survey item.

Overall Satisfaction

Districts rated their overall satisfaction levels for each of the four main services provided by the certification unit, as shown in Table IV-4. The ratings ranged from “very satisfied” to “very dissatisfied.”

Table IV-4. Overall Satisfaction with Certification Unit Services: Districts				
<i>Service*</i>	<i>Very Satisfied</i>	<i>Satisfied</i>	<i>Dissatisfied</i>	<i>Very Dissatisfied</i>
Phone (n=109)	74%	25%	1%	0%
E-mail (n=100)	64%	32%	4%	0%
Websites (n=103)	49%	48%	4%	0%
Regular Mail (n=53)	51%	45%	4%	0%
*Each service either had missing responses or responses indicating the service was not used, which account for the differences in the number of responses analyzed and the 116 total surveys received. Source: PRI survey				

The overall satisfaction levels among districts for the services provided by the certification unit were very high. For each of the four service components, respondents answered they were either “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the service they received at the following rates: phone (99 percent); e-mail (96 percent); websites (97 percent); and regular mail (96 percent). Unlike the responses from educators, no district indicated it was “very dissatisfied” with the overall level of services provided by the certification unit.

Timeliness

Districts were asked to rate their satisfaction with the unit’s phone and e-mail services. The certification unit has a phone line specifically for districts to speak directly with a certification analyst. Superintendents, administrators, human resource personnel, and other central office staff may use the designated line to get information regarding their district’s current employees and potential hires, or about the processing of their applications for district-requested permits and authorizations.

The district phone line is available more frequently than the public line: three days per week for eight hours each day, and four hours a day for the other two days. One designated certification analyst is responsible for the district phone coverage. The same analyst is responsible for handing district e-mails as well, and districts may use the analyst’s direct e-mail address when communicating by e-mail.

Phone service. The PRI survey asked districts ideally how long it should take to speak with “a person knowledgeable about certification” during the unit’s designated calling times. It was clear from the responses that some districts interpreted the question to include the time it should take the certification unit to return a phone call, and not just how long a district is willing

to remain on hold before the call is answered. As a result, no conclusions were drawn about the ideal time within which districts expect to speak with a certification analyst when calling the unit.

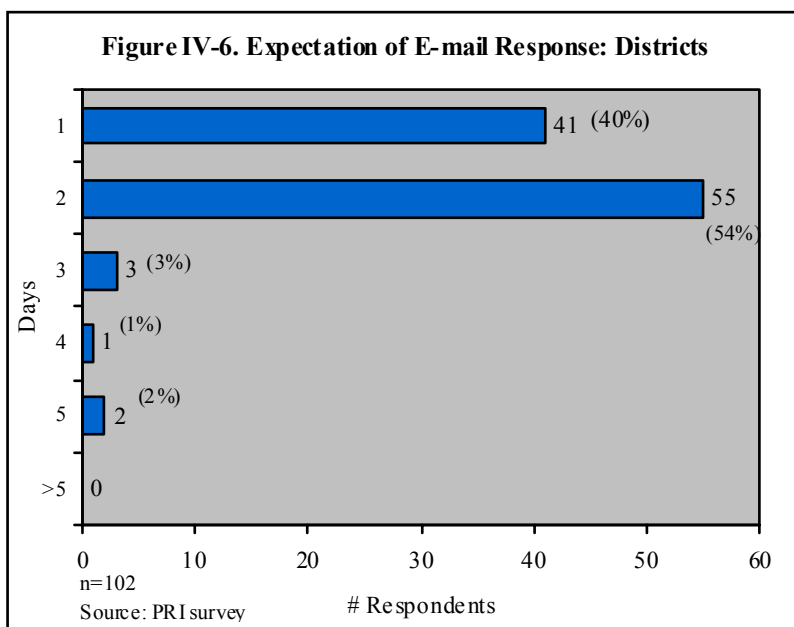
Districts also were asked whether their expectation was met when they called the unit over the past year. The committee believes this question and the question about ideal answering times can be analyzed independently. Under this premise, there is value in examining whether districts believe their expectations were met regarding the certification unit’s timeliness to respond to calls from districts. The survey revealed *97 percent of districts calling the unit indicated their expectations were met for how long it took to speak with someone knowledgeable about certification issues.*

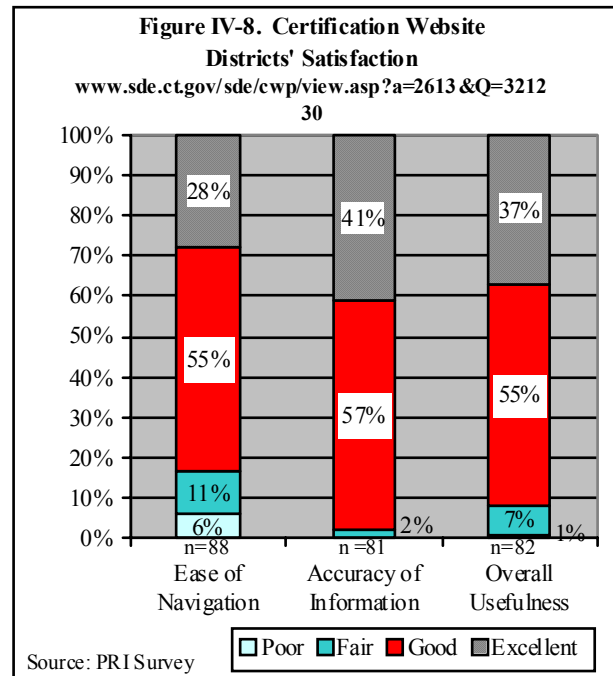
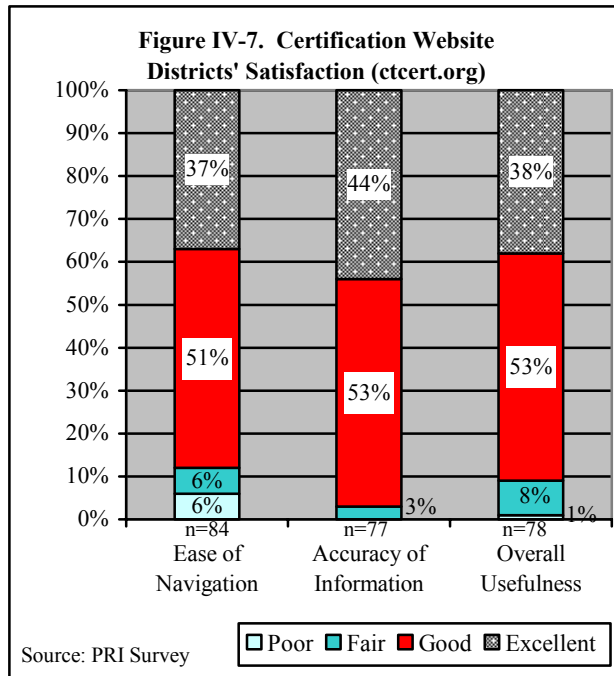
Districts also were asked whether, if they had to choose, the certification unit should maintain its live phone service staffed for districts or use the analyst’s time to respond to e-mail and process applications. Of the 111 districts responding to the question, *92 percent chose to keep the phone service dedicated solely to districts.* Again, this is an indication the live phone service available within the certification unit is a benefit to those district personnel who have questions about certification.

E-mail service. Districts may correspond by e-mail directly with the certification analyst who staffs the district phone line. Figure IV-6 shows *94 percent of district respondents indicated they expected the certification unit to reply to an e-mail request within two days, while 100 percent had an expected time of within five days.* Although not shown in the figure, the survey revealed *89 percent of districts indicated their time expectations were met when they e-mailed the unit.*

Websites

Districts were asked similar questions as asked of educators about the state’s two certification websites. The questions queried districts on their experiences with the websites regarding “ease of navigation,” “accuracy of information,” and “overall usefulness.” The results for the www.ctcert.org site are highlighted below in Figure IV-7, and results for the bureau’s homepage are shown in Figure IV-8.





The figures show there was a relatively high degree of uniformity among districts; they generally favorably responded to the certification websites. Around 90 percent of the respondents rated the sites as either “excellent” or “good” for each of the components, including “overall usefulness.” Again, however, the “ease of navigation” component for both websites received lower ratings, particularly the bureau’s website.

Service Thoroughness and Consistency

Districts rated the overall thoroughness and consistency of the information received from the certification unit by service component used (i.e., phone, e-mail, etc.). As in the educators’ survey, “thoroughness” was considered to mean the information received adequately answered district questions or met their information needs, while “consistency” was considered to mean every time a method was used, the information received was consistent. Table IV-5 shows the results.

Table IV-5. Service Thoroughness and Consistency: Districts				
<i>Service</i>	<i>Both Thorough and Consistent</i>	<i>Thorough, Not Consistent</i>	<i>Consistent, Not Thorough</i>	<i>Neither Thorough nor Consistent</i>
Phone (n=108)	92%	6%	2%	1%
E-Mail (n=101)	85%	7%	4%	4%
Websites (n=94)	88%	2%	6%	3%
Regular Mail (n=55)	82%	15%	4%	0%
Source of data: PRI survey				

A high percentage of districts (ranging from 82 to 92 percent) responded that the information they received from the certification unit was both thorough and consistent for each of the four service components. The responses, overall, were consistent across the four service components, with the exception of the regular mail service, in which roughly double the responses thought the service was thorough although not consistent. Otherwise, nine of ten districts typically thought the unit provided information that was both thorough and consistent, regardless of the method of service used to obtain the information.

SUMMARY

Overall, relatively high percentages of educators and districts favorably rated the certification unit's customer service, according to the PRI survey results presented in the above analysis. Each of the four service components generally received high marks from the unit's main customers, with districts more favorably rating the services. The committee believes the unit should strive further to ensure its customers continue to receive prompt, thorough, and complete service and information.

The program review committee recommends the State Department of Education's certification unit, as part of its management oversight process, periodically elicit feedback from its customers to determine satisfaction with: 1) the unit's timeliness in responding to calls and e-mail, and in processing certification applications; and 2) the overall thoroughness and completeness of the information provided to educators, districts, and the general public. The techniques used to receive such feedback should be determined by the certification unit.

The certification unit has conducted customer service surveys in the recent past to collect feedback from educators who had just received their certificates from SDE. The committee believes a similar, but expanded, effort for all of the unit's customers on a periodic basis could provide useful information to the certification unit about level of service and how it could be improved to best serve its customers. Such an effort should be designed by the certification unit to ensure it meets the unit's needs and can be accomplished with a realistic level of resources.

Appendices

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Customer Service Surveys (Methodologies)

Educators

Committee staff surveyed a randomly-selected group of educators who received a new or renewed certificate during July 2008. The month of July was chosen for several reasons: 1) SDE considers July one of its busiest months for certification purposes, thus broadening the potential pool of educators to survey; 2) educators' experiences with the certification unit were recent; 3) selecting a single month helped keep the survey population manageable for distribution and data analysis purposes; and 4) mailing address information for this group was current, thereby increasing the chances of educators actually receiving, and returning, the survey. A total of just over 3,000 educators received or renewed their state certification in July 2008.

Half of the total educators certified during July 2008 were selected to receive the survey. The sample was chosen from a list of educators generated by SDE organized according to: 1) week in which certification was issued; and 2) within that week, by Social Security number in numerical order. Committee staff designated every other name on the list to receive a survey. Since Social Security numbers are considered a randomly generated identifier (other than the first three digits, which correspond to location – a problem nullified by ordering the numbers), choosing every other name on the list resulted in a randomized sample for the survey.

The survey was mailed by PRI staff to educators' homes initially in mid-September with additional mailings to those educators whose surveys were returned unopened with forwarding addresses through mid-October. Educators had a late September date to return their surveys, although responses were accepted for an additional month. Addresses were acquired from SDE, which keeps the educators' addresses on file for certification purposes.

The survey was accompanied by an explanatory cover letter from the PRI director, and a self-addressed, stamped envelope for the survey's return. There were no identifying marks on the surveys or return envelopes; the surveys were completely anonymous. No pre-mailing notice was distributed; however, committee staff sent post-mailing reminders to each educator. A postcard format was used, which requested the educators return their surveys if they had not already done so, and is provided as part of Appendix A.

A total of 1,521 surveys were sent to educators, in addition to the postcard reminders. Of those, 428 completed surveys were returned. The overall response rate for the survey was 28 percent – which exceeds the 25 percent benchmark that is generally considered a good response rate on which to base results and analysis for a mail survey of this type. This response rate threshold was independently offered by several academics at the University of Connecticut and professionals within SDE last year during the committee's study of the BEST program, and committee staff used this benchmark as part of its methodology for the two surveys conducted as part of the BEST report.

General descriptive information of respondents. Table A-1 provides a summary of basic information about the educators who returned the survey.

Table A-1. General Descriptive Information – Educators’ Survey Respondents					
Type of Certificate Received (n=428)					
<i>Initial</i>	<i>Provisional</i>	<i>Professional New</i>	<i>Professional Renewal</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Missing</i>
178 (42%)	96 (22%)	47 (11%)	82 (19%)	20 (5%)	5 (1%)
Current Position (n=428)					
<i>Educator in CT</i>	<i>Educator in Another state</i>		<i>Not employed as an educator</i>		<i>Missing</i>
328 (77%)	20 (5%)		78 (18%)		2 (1%)
State of Teacher Preparation Program Completion (n=428)					
Connecticut (66%)			Rhode Island (2%)		
Massachusetts (8%)			Vermont (2%)		
New York (8%)			Other (14%)		
Source: PRI staff analysis					

Table A-2 shows educators’ overall usage of the various customer services components offered by the certification unit.

Table A-2. Educators’ Usage of Certification Unit Services (n=428)				
Method	1-5 times	6-10 times	More than 10 times	Did not use this method
a) Phone (i.e., spoke with a certification anal during the Unit’s designated times)	201 (47%)	26 (6%)	9 (2%)	160 (38%)
b) E-mail	166 (39%)	20 (5%)	8 (2%)	181 (42%)
c) Websites	251 (59%)	53 (12%)	36 (9%)	54 (13%)
d) Regular mail (excluding submitting application materials by mail)	170 (40%)	6 (1%)	2 (1%)	182 (43%)
Note: Data for the category “missing” not included. Source: PRI staff analysis				

Districts

Committee staff surveyed human resources directors from all of the state's local and regional school districts, RESCs, and charter schools. Human resources directors are the personnel likely to have frequent, if not the most, contact with the certification unit from the district level.

A list of names and mailing addresses of the districts' human resources directors was obtained from the State Department of Education. The survey was mailed by PRI staff to districts initially in late September with additional mailings to the few districts whose surveys were returned unopened with forwarding addresses through October. Districts had an early October date to return their surveys, although responses were accepted for an additional month.

Similar to the survey to educators, the districts' survey was accompanied by an explanatory cover letter from the PRI director, and a self-addressed, stamped envelope for the survey's return. There were no identifying marks on the surveys or return envelopes; the surveys were completely anonymous. No pre-mailing notice was distributed; however, committee staff sent post-mailing reminders to each district. A postcard format was used, which requested the educators return their surveys if they had not already done so, and is provided as part of this appendix. A total of 170 surveys were distributed. Of the surveys distributed, 116 completed surveys were returned. The overall response rate for the survey was 68 percent.

General descriptive information of respondents. Table A-3 provides a summary of basic descriptive information about the districts returning the survey.

Table A-3. General Descriptive Information – Districts' Survey Respondents	
Type of District (n=116)	
Public	107 (92%)
Charter	5 (4%)
RESC	3 (3%)
Other (i.e., Technical)	1 (1%)
District Enrollment (n=116)	
500 or less	13 (11%)
501-1,000	11 (9%)
1,001-5,000	67 (58%)
5,001-10,000	18 (16%)
More than 10,000	6 (5%)
Missing	1 (1%)
Source: PRI staff analysis	

Table A-4 provides districts' overall usage of the various customer services components offered by the certification unit.

Table A-4. Educators' Usage of Certification Unit Services (n=428)				
Method	1-5 times	6-10 times	More than 10 times	Did not use this method
a) Phone (i.e., spoke with a certification analyst during the Unit's designated times)	18 (16%)	15 (13%)	77 (66%)	4 (3%)
b) E-mail	42 (36%)	27 (23%)	29 (25%)	14 (12%)
c) Websites	16 (14%)	19 (16%)	66 (57%)	6 (5%)
d) Regular mail (excluding submitting application materials by mail)	35 (30%)	9 (8%)	13 (11%)	45 (39%)
Note: Data for the category "missing" not included. Source: PRI staff analysis				

**LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM REVIEW COMMITTEE
SURVEY OF CONNECTICUT EDUCATORS**

GENERAL

1. What certificate did you most recently receive from the Connecticut State Department of Education (SDE)?
a) Initial b) Provisional c) Professional (new) c) Professional (renewal) d) Other: _____
2. What is your current position / how are you employed?
a) Educator in Connecticut b) Educator in another state c) Not employed as an educator
3. In what state did you complete your teacher preparation program? _____

CERTIFICATION UNIT: CUSTOMER SERVICE

Note: Please answer Questions 4-11 based on any contact you have had with the State Department of Education's Certification Unit **WITHIN THE PAST YEAR** -- including the main educator certification website: <http://www.ctcert.org> and the Unit's specific site: <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2613&Q=321230>. PLEASE MARK ONE ANSWER PER CATEGORY, FOR EACH QUESTION.

4. How often did you use the following methods to obtain information from the Certification Unit?

Method	1-5 times	6-10 times	More than 10 times	Did not use this method
a) Phone (i.e., spoke with a certification analyst during the Unit's designated times)				
b) E-mail				
c) Websites				
d) Regular mail (excluding submitting application materials by mail)				

5. What are your expectations of customer service response times when you contact the Certification Unit by phone and/or e-mail, and were those expectations met over the past year?

Timeliness Expectation (fill in blanks)	Were your timeliness expectations met over the past year?		
a) Ideally, if I call the Unit during the designated calling hours, I expect to speak with a person knowledgeable about certification within _____ minutes	Yes	No	Did not call the unit
b) Ideally, if I e-mail the Unit, I expect to receive a response within _____ days	Yes	No	Did not email the unit

6. How thorough and consistent was the information you received from the Certification Unit when you contacted the Unit in the following ways?

Method	Both Thorough and Consistent	Thorough but Not Consistent	Consistent but Not Thorough	Neither	Did not use service
a) Phone (i.e., spoke with a certific. analyst during the Unit's designated times)					
b) E-mail					
c) Websites					
d) Regular mail					

PLEASE COMPLETE REVERSE SIDE →

7. Please rate your experience with the Certification Unit's two certification websites over the past year in the following areas, using the scale: **E = Excellent G = Good F = Fair P = Poor DNU = Did not use website**

Website	Ease of navigation	Accuracy of information	Overall usefulness
a) http://www.ctcert.org			
b) http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2613&Q=321230			

8. Based on your answers to Questions 4-7 above, please indicate your *overall satisfaction* with the service you received from the SDE Certification Unit in the following areas:

Service	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Did not use service
a) Phone					
b) E-mail					
c) Websites					
d) Regular mail					

9. If you were to choose between the Certification Unit continuing its live phone service staffed by certification analysts OR moving the staff resources currently used to answer phones to processing applications and responding to e-mail, which would you choose?

a) Keep live phone service b) Move staff resources to processing applications and responding to e-mail

10. How would you rate the Certification Unit's timeliness in processing your most recent certification application?

a) Very Timely b) Timely c) Somewhat Timely d) Not Timely

CONTINUING EDUCATION

11. How much of your continuing education did you take within your own district over the past three years?

a) All b) Most c) Some d) None

12. Does your school district offer at least 18 hours of continuing education units (CEUs) per year for educators, as required?

a) Yes b) No c) Not sure

13. Do you think your school district provides adequate record-keeping of your CEUs? a) Yes b) No

14. Over the past three years, how often has the content of your district's continuing education courses met your professional development needs? a) Always b) Frequently c) Sometimes d) Never

15. **IF** you completed any continuing education provided by your district within the past three years, did it improve your teaching? a) Yes b) No

16. **IF** you completed any continuing education outside of your district within the past three years, did it improve your teaching? a) Yes b) No

17. In what areas would you like to see more continuing education offered to improve your teaching? (circle all that apply)

a) Classroom management c) Teaching diverse learners e) Using data to improve student learning (including assessing students)
b) Reading instruction d) Technology in the classroom f) Other: _____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME. PLEASE RETURN YOUR COMPLETED SURVEY BY SEPTEMBER 26, 2008.

**LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM REVIEW COMMITTEE
SURVEY OF CONNECTICUT SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

GENERAL

1. What category best describes your type of school district?
a) Public b) Charter c) Technical d) RESC e) Other _____
2. What is the current student enrollment of your school district?
a) 500 or less b) 501-1,000 c) 1,001-5,000 d) 5,001-10,000 e) more than 10,000

CERTIFICATION UNIT: CUSTOMER SERVICE

Note: Please answer Questions 3-7 based on any contact you have had with the State Department of Education's Certification Unit **WITHIN THE PAST YEAR** -- including the main educator certification website: <http://www.ctcert.org> and the Unit's specific site: <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2613&Q=321230>. PLEASE MARK ONE ANSWER PER CATEGORY, FOR EACH QUESTION.

3. How often did you use the following methods to obtain information from the Certification Unit?

Method	1-5 times	6-10 times	More than 10 times	Did not use this service
a) Phone*				
b) E-mail				
c) Websites				
d) Regular mail (excluding submitting application materials by mail)				
* "Phone" means the staffed phone line specifically designated for use by school districts.				

4. What are your expectations of customer service response times when you contact the Certification Unit by phone via the direct line for school districts and/or e-mail, and were those expectations met over the past year?

Timeliness Expectation (fill in blanks)	Were your timeliness expectations met over the past year?		
a) Ideally, if I call the Unit during the designated calling hours, I expect to speak with a person knowledgeable about certification within _____ minutes	Yes	No	Did not call the unit
b) Ideally, if I e-mail the Certification Unit, I expect to receive a response within _____ days	Yes	No	Did not e-mail the unit

5. How thorough and consistent was the information you received from the Certification Unit when you contacted the Unit using the following methods?

Method	Both Thorough and Consistent	Thorough but Not Consistent	Consistent but Not Thorough	Neither
a) Phone*				
b) E-mail				
c) Websites				
d) Regular mail				
* "Phone" means the staffed phone line specifically designated for use by school districts.				

6. Please rate your experience with the Certification Unit's two educator certification websites over the past year in the following areas, using the scale: **E = Excellent G = Good F = Fair P = Poor DNU = Did not use website**

Website	Ease of navigation	Accuracy of information	Overall usefulness
a) http://www.ctcert.org			
b) http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2613&Q=321230			

7. Based on your answers to Questions 3-6 above, what is your *overall* satisfaction level with the customer service you received from the SDE Certification Unit in the following areas:

Service	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Did not use this service
a) Phone*					
b) E-mail					
c) Websites					
d) Regular mail					
* "Phone" means the staffed phone line specifically designated for use by school districts.					

8. If you were to choose between the Certification Unit continuing its live phone service to districts staffed by a certification analyst OR moving the staff resources currently used to answer the phone to processing applications and responding to e-mail, which would you choose?

- a) Keep live phone service
- b) Move staff resources to processing applications and responding to e-mail

COMPLIANCE WITH STATE CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

9. For the 2007-08 school year, did your district receive a report(s) from SDE indicating one or more teachers was not properly certified based on the assignment code indicated in the Staff File information (ED-163) sent to SDE by your district? a) Yes b) No (Skip to Q.13) c) Not sure (Skip to Q.13)

10. If "Yes" to Q.9, has the situation(s) since been resolved? a) Yes b) Some situations have been c) No (Skip to Q.13) d) Not sure (Skip to Q.13)

11. If "Yes" or "Some situations have been" to Q.10, when was the situation(s) generally resolved?
a) Immediately after receipt of the letter from SDE
b) Within 2 months of receipt of the letter from SDE
c) More than 2 months after receipt of the letter from SDE but before the end of the school year
d) Between the end of the 2007-08 school year and now
e) Not sure because SDE has not contacted the district since the end of the 2007-08 school year

12. If "Yes" to Q.10, generally how was the situation(s) resolved?
a) Staff File information was incorrect and later corrected
b) SDE certification information was not correct and later corrected
c) District removed teacher(s) from the unauthorized assignment
d) Teacher(s) attained proper endorsement, permit, or authorization
e) Other _____

CONTINUING EDUCATION

13. How does your school district assess the needs of educators when the district is deciding what continuing education to offer in a given year?

- a) The district's central office conducts an annual survey of educators to formally assess their continuing education goals and objectives
- b) The district's school principals provide suggestions to the central office based on the needs of their schools' educators as identified by the principals
- c) The teachers union leader provides suggestions to the central office based on an annual survey of the district's educators
- d) The teachers union leader provides suggestions based on informal input from teachers
- e) Educators submit their suggestions for continuing education courses directly to the district's central office on an informal basis
- f) Other _____

14. Does your district use an automated system to manage educators' continuing education information (e.g., ProTraxx)?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Not sure

MISCELLANEOUS

15. When does your district generally do most of its hiring for the next school year?

- a) January, February, March
- b) April, May, June
- c) July, August, September
- d) October, November, December

16. Does your district extend hiring offers to prospective educators not yet certified by the Connecticut State Department of Education but who appear to meet all the requirements for certification?

- a) Yes (Skip to Q. 18)
- b) No
- c) Not sure (Skip to Q. 18)

17. If "No" to Q 16, why not?

- a) The district hires prospective teachers only after they have a certificate from the State Department of Education
- b) Sufficient numbers of qualified candidates who are already certified usually apply
- c) Other: _____

18. In general, how would your district handle situations of prospective educators hired by the district who have not received their Connecticut certification by the start of the school year?

- a) Situation has never occurred in my school district
- b) Teacher candidate is designated as a substitute or a long-term substitute
- c) District receives approval for a durational shortage area permit for the teacher candidate
- d) Candidate begins teaching with the understanding that the certification is pending at the State Department of Education
- e) Other: _____

19. Are you the person responsible for submitting the Staff File information (Form ED-163) to the State Department of Education? a) Yes b) No

20. If "No" to Question 19, what is the job title of the person responsible for submitting the Staff File information?

21. How long has the person submitting the Staff File information (including you) been responsible for this function?

- a) Fall 2008 will be the first year
- b) 1-5 years
- c) More than 5 years

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME. PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR COMPLETED SURVEY BY
OCTOBER 3, 2008.**

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Appendix B

Endorsements

Information on specific endorsements is found on the following pages:

Summary of Common Teaching Endorsements	B-2
Integrated Special Education/Early Childhood Education	B-3
Elementary Education	B-4
Foreign Language, Pre-K Through Grade 8	B-5
Middle Grades Subjects	B-6
Secondary Academic Subjects	B-8
Comprehensive Special Education	B-11
Special Subjects	B-12
Blind, Partially Sighted, or Hearing Impaired	B-14
Remedial Reading and Language Arts	B-16
Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages	B-17
School Library Media Endorsement	B-18
Driver Education	B-19
Cooperative Work Education	B-20
Health Occupations	B-21
School Dental Hygienist-Teacher	B-22
School Nurse-Teacher	B-23
Trade and Industrial Occupations	B-24
Agriculture Education	B-25
Marketing Education	B-26

Table B-1. Summary of Common Teacher Endorsements									
Area	Requirements								
	Area-Specific Courses ¹	Gen. Acad. Courses ²	Major	Total Credits Prof. Ed.	Foundations of Ed.	Ed. Psych.	Curriculum & Methods	Field Experience	Special Ed.
Early Childhood	15 semester hours of credits (SHC)	X	Any or ID ⁴ with emphasis in human growth & development	36	X	---	X	2 placements	---
Elementary	6 SHC	X	Any or ID with emphasis in any subject	30	X	X	X	1 placement	36 clock hrs.
Foreign Language, PK-8	6 SHC	X	Endorsement subject, or 30 credits in subject and 9 in related subject	18	X	X	X	1 placement	36 clock hrs.
Middle Grades	---	X	Subject, or ID with concentration in subject	30	X	X	X	1 placement	36 clock hrs.
Secondary Academic	---	X	Subject, or 30 credits in subject and 9 in related subject	18	X	X	X	1 placement	36 clock hrs.
Special Education (Comprehensive)	Yes, no SHC specified	Not specified	Not specified; must complete planned Spec. Ed. program	Not specified	---	X	X	2 handicapping conditions	Not applicable
Special Subjects (Art, physical education, etc.)	---	X	Subject, or 30 credits in subject and 9 in related subject, or major in subject covered by endorsement sought	18	X	X	X	1 placement	36 clock hrs.

¹ Specific course requirements listed separately from professional education requirements; most often, human growth & development

² Requirement = 39 hours in five of six areas, and 3-hr. course in U.S. history

³ "Credits" are semester hours of credit

⁴ "ID" is used as an abbreviation for "interdisciplinary major"

Source of data: R.C.S.A. Sec. 10-145d-429 to -542, inclusive

Integrated Early Childhood/Special Education Endorsements

When: Two separate endorsements: nursery through grade 3 (#113), and birth through kindergarten (#112)
 Education: Bachelor's degree
 Test: Are necessary for #113 only: Praxis II: Early Childhood: Content Knowledge (passing score: 156); and
 Praxis II: Education of Young Children (passing score: 158)

<i>Type of Requirement</i>	<i>General Topic & Semester Hrs. of Credit</i>	<i>Specific Topics/Areas To Be Covered</i>
Area-specific courses	Human growth and development: 15 sem. hrs. of credit	Typical and atypical development, psychology of learning, and family studies
General academic courses	39 sem. hrs. of credit in five of six areas, and 3 sem. hrs. in U.S. history	Six areas: natural sciences, social studies, fine arts, English, mathematics, foreign language
Major	Any major, or 39 sem. hrs. of credit interdisciplinary major with at least 18 sem. hrs. in human growth and development	For interdisciplinary major: Human growth and development topics include: typical and atypical development, psychology of learning, and family studies. Remainder of 39 credits distributed among maximum of three additional subjects related to human growth and development
Professional Education	Total semester hours of credit: 36	
	1. Foundations of ed.: Yes	Includes areas such as: Philosophy of education, history of education, and comparative education
	2. Ed. psychology: No	---
	3. Curriculum & methods: Yes	For typical and special-needs children; integrated curriculum and strategies in each area: a) six credits, three in teaching language arts; also learning language arts, children's literature, mathematics, science, social studies, expressive arts, health/safety; or developmentally appropriate curriculum for Early Childhood (EC) and integrated EC curriculum; b) observation and assessment of development in young children and planning individualized programs; c) play; d) EC models and professional issues; e) special needs. Additional requirements depend on age of concentration within EC.
	4. Field experience: Yes, 6-12 sem. hrs. of credit total in two placements	Include observations and limited participation before full-time student teaching. Also, student teaching in each of two areas: pre-K or K, including children with special needs; and either for birth-K, infants and toddlers including special needs, or for nursery-grade 3, in grades 1, 2, or 3.
	5. Special education: Not other than curriculum & methods	
Source of data: R.C.S.A. Sec. 10-145d-429 to -433, inclusive		

Elementary Endorsement

When: Teacher in grades K- 6 except as sole teacher of art, health, music, or physical education
 Education: Bachelor's degree
 Test: Praxis II: Elementary Education: Curriculum, Instruction, & Assessments (passing score: 163); and
 Praxis II: Elementary Education: Content Area Exercises (passing score: 148)

<i>Type of Requirement</i>	<i>General Topic & Semester Hrs. of Credit</i>	<i>Specific Topics/Areas To Be Covered</i>
Area-specific courses	Human growth and development: 6 sem. hrs. of credit	None
General academic courses	39 sem. hrs. of credit in five of six areas, and 3 sem. hrs. in U.S. history	Six areas: natural sciences, social studies, fine arts, English, mathematics, foreign language
Major	Any major, or 39 sem. hrs. of credit interdisciplinary major with at least 18 sem. hrs. in any one subject	Interdisciplinary major must have remainder of its courses distributed among no more than three additional subjects related to area of concentration
Professional Education	Total semester hours of credit: 30	
	1. Foundations of ed.: Yes	Includes areas such as: Philosophy of education, history of education, comparative education, and school effectiveness
	2. Ed. psychology: Yes	Includes areas such as: Growth and development of children from birth through life span, psychology of learning, child-adolescent psychology, and mental hygiene
	3. Curriculum & methods: Yes	1) Six credits in language arts, which may include reading, writing, speaking, listening, and spelling; and 2) Areas such as: effective teaching skills, teaching language arts, teaching mathematics, and teaching the arts
	4. Field experience: Yes, 6-12 sem. hrs. of credit	Must student teach in grades K-6
	5. Special education: Yes, 36 clock hours	Understanding the growth and development of exceptional children, including handicapped and gifted and talented children and children who may require special education, and methods for identifying, planning for and working effectively with special-needs children in the regular classroom.
Source of data: R.C.S.A. Sec. 10-145d-434 to -438, inclusive		

Foreign Language Instruction Pre-K through Grade 8 Endorsement

When: Teacher of foreign language in pre-K through grade 8 when departmentalized instruction in foreign language is offered at the elementary level; endorsements awarded individually for each language. Must also hold or be eligible for a secondary-level endorsement in the foreign language.

Education: Bachelor's degree

Test: American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL): Oral Proficiency Interview (passing: intermediate high) and ACTFL: Writing Proficiency Test (passing: intermediate high)

<i>Type of Requirement</i>	<i>General Topic & Semester Hrs. of Credit</i>	<i>Specific Topics/Areas To Be Covered</i>
Area-specific courses	3 sem. hrs. of credit each: 1) Language acquisition in young children; and 2) Methods and materials for teaching foreign language at the elementary level	---
General academic courses	39 sem. hrs. of credit in five of six areas, and 3 sem. hrs. in U.S. history	Six areas: natural sciences, social studies, fine arts, English, mathematics, foreign languages
Major	One of two options required: 1. Subject area major in area for which endorsement is sought 2. 24 sem. hrs. of credit in foreign language	---
Professional Education	Total semester hours of credit: 18	
	1. Foundations of ed.: Yes	Includes areas such as: Philosophy of education, history of education, comparative education, and school effectiveness
	2. Ed. psychology: Yes	Includes: Growth and development from birth through lifespan, psychology of learning, child-adolescent psychology, and mental hygiene
	3. Curriculum & methods: Yes, 6 sem. hrs. of credit	Includes areas such as: Subject area curriculum and methodology, and effective teaching skills
	4. Field experience: Yes, 6-12 sem. hrs. of credit	Must student teach in secondary school
	5. Special education: Yes, 36 clock hours	Understanding growth and development of exceptional children, including handicapped and gifted and talented children and children who may require special education, and methods for identifying, planning for and working effectively with special-needs children in the regular classroom

Source of data: R.C.S.A. Sec. 10-145d-439 to -443, inclusive, and R.C.S.A. 10-145d-451

Middle Grades Endorsements

When: Teacher of specific subject area(s) at middle school setting, including grades five and six when departmentalized instruction is offered, and in grades four, five, and six when departmentalized instruction in foreign language is offered, in endorsed subject(s) only

Education: Bachelor's degree

Test: No test common to all middle grade endorsements; see "Specific Middle Grade Endorsements" on the following page for information on Praxis II test(s) required for each middle grade endorsement

<i>Type of Requirement</i>	<i>General Topic & Semester Hrs. of Credit</i>	<i>Specific Topics/Areas To Be Covered</i>
Area-specific courses	None specified	---
General academic courses	39 sem. hrs. of credit in five of six areas, and 3 sem. hrs. in U.S. history	Six areas: natural sciences, social studies, fine arts, English, mathematics, foreign language
Major	<p>One of three options required:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Subject area major in one of several areas 2. Interdisciplinary major 3. 24 sem. hrs. of credit in a subject and either a) 15 sem. hrs. of credit in a second subject (may result in second endorsement); or b) 15 sem. hrs. of credit in special subject (music, art, P.E., health, etc.), special education, or related subjects (not result in second endorsement) 	<p>Within each of the three options:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Subject area major in any of following: English, mathematics, biology, physics, chemistry, earth science, general science, social science, history, political science, economics, geography, anthropology, sociology. 2. Interdisciplinary major in any of following: humanities, history/social science, or integrated science 3. a) 24 credits in any subjects in 1. above, except for general science; and b) 15 credits in any subject in 1. above
Professional Education	<p>Total semester hours of credit: 30</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Foundations of ed.: Yes 2. Ed. psychology: Yes 3. Curriculum & methods: Yes, 6 sem. hrs. of credit 4. Field experience: Yes, 6-12 sem. hrs. of credit 5. Special education: Yes, 36 clock hours 	<p>Includes areas such as: Philosophy of education, history of education, comparative education, school effectiveness, and organization of middle grade education</p> <p>Includes areas such as: Human growth and development, psychology of learning, child-adolescent psychology, mental hygiene, developmental characteristics of early adolescent students, and family studies</p> <p>Including study in reading and writing across the middle grades curriculum, and methods for teaching at the middle grades</p> <p>Must student teach in middle grades school setting</p> <p>Understanding the growth and development of exceptional children, including handicapped and gifted and talented children and children who may require special education, and methods for identifying, planning for and working effectively with special-needs children in the regular classroom</p>
Source of data: R.C.S.A. Sec. 10-145d-444 to -448, inclusive		

Specific Middle Grades Endorsements

When: Issued in conjunction with a middle grades endorsement; teacher must have an endorsement in at least one particular subject area to teach at the middle grades

Education: Bachelor's degree

Requirements: See "Middle Grades Endorsements" on the previous page for requirements common to all middle grades endorsements. Chart below outlines particular requirements for each endorsement. To receive a subject area endorsement, teacher must have a major or concentration in the subject.

Test: Each area has its own required Praxis II test(s)

<i>Major or Concentration</i>	<i>Test</i>	<i>Specific Topics/Areas To Be Covered</i>
Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Earth Science, or General Science	Middle School Science (passing: 162)	---
English	Middle School English & Language Arts (passing: 164)	Evaluation and instruction of students in language arts
History/Social Studies	Middle School Social Studies (passing: 160)	1. History: U.S. history, western civilization or European history, and nonwestern history; and 2. Study in at least three areas of social science
Humanities Interdisciplinary	Middle School English & Language Arts (passing: 164)	1. 18 sem. hrs. of credit in language arts/English; and 2. Coursework in at least 3 of these areas: literature, philosophy, drama, fine arts, dance, theology, or foreign language
Integrated Science Interdisciplinary	Middle School Science (passing: 162)	1. Concentration in at least one area of science, with at least 18 sem. hrs. of credit, including minimum of three lab courses; and 2. Coursework in each of the other three areas of science, for minimum of 7 sem. hrs. of credit each, including at least one lab course in each area
Mathematics	Middle School Mathematics (passing: 158)	Calculus
Source of data: R.C.S.A. Sec. 10-145d-446		

Secondary Academic Endorsements

When: Teacher of specific subject area(s) at secondary level of grades 7-12, including grades 5 and 6 when departmentalized instruction is offered, in endorsed subject(s) only; also to teach endorsed subject(s) in the adult high school credit diploma program

Education: Bachelor's degree

Test: No test common to all secondary academic endorsements; see "Specific Secondary Academic Endorsements" table for information on Praxis II and other test(s) required for each secondary academic endorsement

<i>Type of Requirement</i>	<i>General Topic & Semester Hrs. of Credit</i>	<i>Specific Topics/Areas To Be Covered</i>
Area-specific courses	None	---
General academic courses	39 sem. hrs. of credit in five of six areas, and 3 sem. hrs. in U.S. history	Six areas: natural sciences, social studies, fine arts, English, mathematics, foreign language
Major	One of two options required: 1. Subject area major in area for which endorsement is sought 2. 30 sem. hrs. of credit in subject for which endorsement is sought, and 9 sem. hrs. in subject(s) related to endorsement subject	See "Specific Secondary Academic Endorsements" table for information on particular requirements for each subject
Professional Education	Total semester hours of credit: 18 1. Foundations of ed.: Yes 2. Ed. psychology: Yes 3. Curriculum & methods: Yes, 6 credits 4. Field experience: Yes, 6-12 sem. hrs. of credit 5. Special education: Yes, 36 clock hours	Includes areas such as: Philosophy of education, history of education, comparative education, and school effectiveness Includes areas such as: Growth and development from birth through lifespan, psychology of learning, child-adolescent psychology, and mental hygiene Includes areas such as: subject area curriculum and methodology, and effective teaching skills Must student teach in secondary school Understanding the growth and development of exceptional children, including handicapped and gifted and talented children and children who may require special education, and methods for identifying, planning for and working effectively with special-needs children in the regular classroom
Source of data: R.C.S.A. Sec. 10-145d-449 to -453, inclusive		

Specific Secondary Academic Endorsements

When: Issued in conjunction with the secondary academic certificates; teacher must have at least one endorsement in a particular subject area to teach at the secondary level

Education: Bachelor's degree

Requirements: See "Secondary Academic Certificate" for requirements common to all middle grades endorsements. Chart below outlines particular requirements for each endorsement. To receive a subject area endorsement, teacher must have a major or concentration in the subject.

Test: Each area has its own required Praxis II test(s), except for Foreign Language, which has a different type of test

Secondary Endorsement	Coursework Required: All except General Science may have subject major or 30 sem. hrs. of credit plus 9 sem. hrs. in related area	Test	Specific Topics/Areas To Be Covered
Biology	None additional	Biology: Content Knowledge (passing: 152)	None
Business Education	Can elect to complete interdisciplinary major	Business Education (passing: 620)	Interdisciplinary major consists of 39 sem. hrs. of credit in subjects covered by endorsement
Chemistry	None additional	Chemistry: Content Knowledge (passing: 151) Chemistry: Content Essays (passing: 140)	None
Earth Science	None additional	Earth Science: Content Knowledge (passing: 157)	None
English	None additional	English Language, Literature & Composition: Content Knowledge (passing: 172) English Language, Literature & Composition: Essays (passing: 160)	None
Foreign Language*	24 sem. hrs. of credit in language for which endorsement sought	American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL): Oral Proficiency Interview (passing: intermediate high) ACTFL: Writing Proficiency Test (passing: intermediate high)	
General Science	Subject major	General Science: Content Knowledge (passing: 157) General Science: Content Essays (passing: 145)	39 sem. hrs. of credit in science including study in biology, chemistry, physics, and earth science

Secondary Endorsement	Coursework Required: All except General Science may have subject major or 30 sem. hrs. of credit plus 9 sem. hrs. in related area	Test	Specific Topics/Areas To Be Covered
History/Social Studies	Can elect to complete interdisciplinary major	Social Studies: Content Knowledge (passing: 162)	Within each major option: 1. History major includes 18 sem. hrs. of credit in social studies 2. Major in political science, economics, geography, anthropology, or sociology, including 18 sem. hrs. of credit in history 3. Interdisciplinary major consists of 39 sem. hrs. of credit in subjects covered by endorsement with at least one course in subjects in 2. above, and including 18 sem. hrs. of credit in history (including U.S. history, western civilization or European history, and nonwestern history)
Physics	None additional	Physics: Content Knowledge (passing: 141) Physics: Content Essays (passing: 135)	
*Foreign language endorsements are issued individually for each endorsement, and the major must correspond to the endorsement sought. For example, a teacher seeking an endorsement to teach Spanish must major in Spanish. Source of data: R.C.S.A. Sec. 10-145d-451			

Comprehensive Special Education Endorsement

When: Teacher who provides special education instruction to children in grades 1-12 who are mentally handicapped (either educable or trainable); physically handicapped; autistic; traumatically brain injured; socially and emotionally maladjusted; neurologically impaired; learning disabled, except for blind, partially sighted, or hearing impaired

Education: Bachelor's degree

Test: Praxis II: Education of Exceptional Children: Core Content Knowledge (passing score: 158)

<i>Type of Requirement</i>	<i>General Topic & Semester Hrs. of Credit</i>	<i>Specific Topics/Areas To Be Covered</i>
Area-specific courses	Diagnosis of handicapped children	---
General academic courses	None specified	---
Major	None specified	---
Professional Education	Total semester hours of credit: No requirement specified	
	1. Foundations of ed.: No	---
	2. Ed. psychology: Yes	Psychoeducational theory and development of handicapped children
	3. Curriculum & methods: Yes	Curriculum and methods of teaching handicapped children; and program planning and evaluation of handicapped children
	4. Field experience: Yes, 6-12 sem. hours of credit	Student-teaching must involve at least two handicapping conditions covered by the endorsement
	5. Special education: N/A	---
Source of data: R.C.S.A. Sec. 10-145d-538 to -542, inclusive		

Special Subjects Endorsements

When: Teacher of the following specific special subject(s) at the elementary or secondary level (pre-K through grade 12), or in the adult education high school credit diploma program: agriculture, art, health, home economics, music, physical education, and technology education

Education: Bachelor's degree

Test: No test common to all special subject endorsements; see "Specific Special Subject Endorsements: Tests" table on the following page for information on Praxis II test(s) required for each special subject endorsement

<i>Type of Requirement</i>	<i>General Topic & Semester Hrs. of Credit</i>	<i>Specific Topics/Areas To Be Covered</i>
Area-specific courses	None specified	---
General academic courses	39 sem. hrs. of credit in five of six areas, and 3-credit course in U.S. history	Six areas: natural sciences, social studies, fine arts, English, mathematics, foreign language
Major	One of three options required: 1. Subject area major in area for which endorsement is sought 2. 30 sem. hrs. of credit in subject for which endorsement is sought, and 9 sem. hrs. in subject(s) related to endorsement subject 3. Major in any of subjects covered by endorsement sought	---
Professional Education	Total semester hours of credit: 18 1. Foundations of ed.: Yes 2. Ed. psychology: Yes 3. Curriculum & methods: Yes 4. Field experience: Yes, 6-12 sem. hrs. of credit 5. Special education: Yes, 36 clock hours	Includes areas such as: Philosophy of education, history of education, comparative education, and school effectiveness Includes areas such as: Growth and development from birth through lifespan, psychology of learning, child-adolescent psychology, and mental hygiene Includes areas such as: subject area curriculum and methodology, and effective teaching skills --- Understanding the growth and development of exceptional children, including handicapped and gifted and talented children and children who may require special education, and methods for identifying, planning for and working effectively with special-needs children in the regular classroom
Source of data: R.C.S.A. Sec. 10-145d-454 to -458, inclusive		

Specific Special Subject Endorsements: Tests

Most special subjects require one or multiple Praxis II tests.

<i>Special Subject</i>	<i>Test Required</i>
Agriculture	None
Art	Art Making (passing: 148) Art: Content, Traditions, Criticism, & Aesthetics (passing: 130) Art: Content Knowledge (passing: 157)
Health Education	Health Education (passing: 680)
Home Economics	Family & Consumer Sciences (passing: 630)
Music	Music: Content Knowledge (includes listening section) (passing: 153) Music: Concepts & Processes (passing: 150)
Physical Education	Physical Education: Content Knowledge (passing: 141) Physical Education: Movement Forms – Analysis & Design (passing: 154)
Technology Education	Technology Education (passing: 640)
Source of data: ETS, “The Praxis Series Passing Scores by Test and State,” March 1, 2008. http://www.etsliteracy.com/Media/Tests/PRAxis/pdf/09706passingscores.pdf	

Blind, Partially Sighted, and Hearing Impaired Endorsements

When: Teacher of a class of students in pre-K through grade 12 who all have one of the following conditions: blind, partially sighted, or hearing impaired

Education: Bachelor's degree

Test: None

<i>Type of Requirement</i>	<i>General Topic & Semester Hrs. of Credit</i>	<i>Specific Topics/Areas To Be Covered</i>
Area-specific courses	See "5. Special Education" below	---
General academic courses	45 sem. hrs. of credit	Including: 6 credits in English, 6 credits in social science (which must include U.S. history), and study in at least three of these six areas, in addition to the area of major: English, mathematics, science, social science, foreign language, and fine arts
Major	Any major, or 39 sem. hrs. of credit interdisciplinary major with at least 18 sem. hrs. of credit in any one subject	Interdisciplinary major must have remainder of its courses distributed among no more than three additional subjects related to area of concentration
Professional Education	Total semester hours of credit: 30	
	1. Foundations of ed.: Yes	Includes areas such as: Philosophy of education, history of education, comparative education, school effectiveness, principles of education, community sociology, community resources, and social anthropology
	2. Ed. psychology: Yes	Includes areas such as: Human growth and development, psychology of learning, child-adolescent psychology, and mental hygiene
	3. Curriculum & methods: Yes	Includes areas such as: Methods of teaching, teaching of reading, school library media instruction, individualizing instruction, educational measurements, principles of curriculum construction, specific field, and extra-curricular activities
	4. Field experience: Yes, 6-12 sem. hrs. of credit	---
	5. Special education: Yes	a) Blind: 12 credits among each of these areas - survey of eye conditions; psychology of the blind; methods and materials for teaching the blind; and Braille b) Partially sighted: 12 credits among each of these areas - basic orientation in eye conditions; effect of eye conditions on educational programs and vocational outlook; methods of teaching the partially-sighted; and psychology of physically handicapped children c) Hearing impaired: 30 credits in planned program of study, including each of these areas regarding teaching to hearing-impaired – teaching of speech; teaching of language; methods of teaching elementary school subjects; methods of teaching lip reading; auditory and speech

		mechanisms; audiometry, hearing aids, and auditory training; and education and guidance
Source of data: R.C.S.A. Sec. 10-145d-533 to -537, inclusive		

Remedial Reading and Language Arts Endorsement

When: Anyone providing special remedial or developmental reading and/or language arts instruction for elementary or secondary students (grades 1 through 12). A person must hold and work under a grade level teaching certificate before obtaining this endorsement.

Education: Bachelor's degree

Experience: 30 school months of successful classroom teaching

Test: None

These requirements listed below are in addition to the requirements for the teacher's first (teaching) endorsement, except where noted.

<i>Type of Requirement</i>	<i>General Topic & Semester Hrs. of Credit</i>	<i>Specific Topics/Areas To Be Covered</i>
Area-specific courses	21 sem. hrs. of credit specific to this endorsement	One course in each of the following: 1) Developmental reading 2) Reading in content areas 3) Diagnosis and remediation of reading and language arts difficulties 4) Clinical practices in reading and language arts, for at least 6 semester hours 5) Language arts 6) Tests and measurement
General academic courses	None specified	---
Major	None specified	---
Professional Education	Total semester hours of credit: NA	
	1. Foundations of ed.: NA	---
	2. Ed. psychology: NA	---
	3. Curriculum & methods: NA	---
	4. Field experience: No	---
	5. Special education: Yes, 36 clock hours	Same as for most other teaching endorsements
Source of data: R.C.S.A. Sec. 10-145d-480 to -484, inclusive		

Teachers of English for Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) Endorsement

When: Teachers of English for speakers of other languages (TESOL) in grades pre-K through adult
 Education: Bachelor's degree
 Test: None

<i>Type of Requirement</i>	<i>General Topic & Semester Hrs. of Credit</i>	<i>Specific Topics/Areas To Be Covered</i>
Area-specific courses	Completion of a planned bilingual education program of preparation at an approved institution	---
General academic courses	39 sem. hrs. of credit in 5 of 6 areas, and 3 sem. hrs. in U.S. history	Six areas: natural sciences, social studies, fine arts, English, mathematics, foreign language
Major	Two options	Options: 1. TESOL 2. 30 hours in TESOL and 9 hours in bilingualism, a foreign language, or literacy development. The 30 TESOL hours must include English language, language theory, culture and intergroup relations, and linguistic and academic assessment of LEP students (specific topics are included for each category).
Professional Education	Total semester hours of credit: 30	
	1. Foundations of ed.: Yes	Includes areas such as: Philosophy of education, history of education, comparative education, and school effectiveness
	2. Ed. psychology: NA	Includes areas such as: Growth and development of children from birth through life span, psychology of learning, child-adolescent psychology, and mental hygiene
	3. Curriculum & methods: Yes	Must include 6 hours in methods of TESOL, and curriculum development related to TESOL
	4. Field experience: Yes, 6-12 sem. hrs. of credit over two placements	As a TESOL at both the elementary and secondary levels
	5. Special education: Yes, 36 clock hours	Same as for most other teaching endorsements
Source of data: R.C.S.A. Sec. 10-145d-470 to -474, inclusive		

School Library Media Endorsement

When: Anyone employed as a school library media specialist for grades pre-K through 12
 Education: Bachelor's degree and 24 hours of credit in an approved graduate program of certification for school library media specialists
 Experience: 10 school months of successful teaching
 Test: None at initial level

These requirements are in addition to the requirements completed to make the teacher eligible for or a holder of a valid CT certificate

<i>Type of Requirement</i>	<i>General Topic & Semester Hrs. of Credit</i>	<i>Specific Topics/Areas To Be Covered</i>
Area-specific courses	24 sem. hrs. of credit in program, including 12 sem. hrs. in specific topics	Topics are: a) design, implementation, and evaluation of media programs; b) evaluation, selection, acquisition, organization, production and retrieval of media; c) teaching students, staff, and faculty to utilize media; d) assisting students in interpretation of materials; e) application of principles of administration and supervision; f) forming and designing school library facilities; and g) special education (mentioned below)
General academic courses	None specified	---
Major	None specified	---
Professional Education	Total semester hours of credit: 18	
	1. Foundations of ed.: Yes	None
	2. Ed. psychology: Yes	None
	3. Curriculum & methods: Yes	None, but see above
	4. Field experience: Yes 6 sem. hrs. of credit	In school library media center
	5. Special education: Yes, 36 clock hours	Same as for most other teaching endorsements
Source: R.C.S.A. Sec. 10-145d-459 to -461, inclusive		

Driver Education Endorsement

When: Certified secondary teacher who is serving as a driver education teacher, although a local board of education may contract with a licensed drivers' school

Education: Bachelor's degree (required to obtain a secondary-level teaching certificate)

Experience: None

Test: None

These requirements are in addition to the requirements completed to make the teacher a holder of a valid CT certificate.

<i>Type of Requirement</i>	<i>General Topic & Semester Hrs. of Credit</i>	<i>Specific Topics/Areas To Be Covered</i>
Area-specific courses	3 sem. hrs. of credit in driver education or equivalent in an approved driver education seminar	Not specified
General academic courses	None specified	---
Major	None specified	---
Professional Education	Total semester hours of credit: None required for this endorsement	
	1. Foundations of ed.: NA	---
	2. Ed. psychology: NA	---
	3. Curriculum & methods: NA	---
	4. Field experience: NA	---
	5. Special education: NA	---
Source of data: R.C.S.A. Sec. 10-145d-464 to -465, inclusive		

Cooperative Work Education Endorsement

When: Teacher coordinators of cooperative work education, in grades 7 through 12. Must hold or be eligible for a secondary-level endorsement in any subject or field; excludes an elementary endorsement that includes grades 7 and 8.

Education: Bachelor's degree

Experience: One year of non-teaching work experience

Test: None

Applicant must meet the secondary level endorsement requirements (not included below), as well as the requirements below.

<i>Type of Requirement</i>	<i>General Topic & Semester Hrs. of Credit</i>	<i>Specific Topics/Areas To Be Covered</i>
Area-specific courses	3 sem. hrs. of credit in principles and organization of cooperative work education	---
General academic courses	None specified	---
Major	None specified	---
Professional Education	Total semester hours of credit: 6	
	1. Foundations of ed.: No	---
	2. Ed. psychology: No	---
	3. Curriculum & methods: Yes	Must complete 3 credits each in: 1) Foundations and principals of vocational education; and 2) Labor market analysis trends and job readiness
	4. Field experience: No	---
	5. Special education: Yes, 36 clock hours	Same as for most other teaching endorsements
Source of data: R.C.S.A. Sec. 10-145d-504 to -508, inclusive		

Health Occupations Endorsement

When: Teachers of health occupations in comprehensive high schools; not valid in the vocational-technical school system
 Education: Bachelor's degree
 Experience: One year in health occupations, and if appropriate to subject, holds a valid license issued by the CT Department of Health
 Test: None other than for Health license (if any)

<i>Type of Requirement</i>	<i>General Topic & Semester Hrs. of Credit</i>	<i>Specific Topics/Areas To Be Covered</i>
Area-specific courses	None specified	---
General academic courses	45 sem. hrs. of credit	Including: 6 hours in English, 6 hours in social science (which must include U.S. history), and study in at least three of these six areas, in addition to the area of major: English, mathematics, science, social science, foreign language, and fine arts
Major	Any major, or 39 sem. hrs. of credit interdisciplinary major with at least 18 sem. hrs. in any one subject	Interdisciplinary major must have remainder of its courses distributed among no more than three additional subjects related to area of concentration
Professional Education	Total semester hours of credit: 6	
	1. Foundations of ed.: Possibly	See below
	2. Ed. psychology: Possibly	See below
	3. Curriculum & methods: Yes	Must complete 6 hours in either: 1) Teaching vocational and industrial education; or 2) Foundations of education, educational psychology, adolescent psychology, psychology of learning, curriculum and methods of teaching, classroom instruction and management, and multicultural diversity or equity issues in education
	4. Field experience: No, not in addition to required job experience	---
	5. Special education: Yes, 36 clock hours	Same as for most other teaching endorsements
Source of data: R.C.S.A. Sec. 10-145d-490 to -494, inclusive		

School Dental Hygienist-Teacher Endorsement

When: Registered dental hygienists employed by a board of education who give instruction in dental health as part of the school program
 Education: Bachelor's degree or equivalent
 Experience: Valid CT dental hygienist license issued by the CT Department of Health
 Test: None other than for Health license (if any)

<i>Type of Requirement</i>	<i>General Topic & Semester Hrs. of Credit</i>	<i>Specific Topics/Areas To Be Covered</i>
Area-specific courses	Yes	See below
General academic courses	None specified	---
Major	None specified	---
Professional Education	Total semester hours of credit: 6	
	1. Foundations of ed.: Yes	Listed as school organization
	2. Ed. psychology: Yes	Listed as child growth and development
	3. Curriculum & methods: Yes	Listed as methods and materials of instruction
	4. Field experience: No	---
	5. Special education: Yes, 36 clock hours	Same as for most other teaching endorsements
Source of data: R.C.S.A. Sec. 10-145d-551 to -554		

School Nurse-Teacher Endorsement

When: Registered nurses employed by a board of education who teach health education
 Education: Bachelor's degree and graduated from school of professional nursing approved by State Board of Examiners for Nursing
 Experience: Valid CT registered nurse license issued by the CT Department of Health
 Test: None other than for Health license (if any)

<i>Type of Requirement</i>	<i>General Topic & Semester Hrs. of Credit</i>	<i>Specific Topics/Areas To Be Covered</i>
Area-specific courses	Yes	36 hour professional education requirement must include coursework in: 1. Health education: Includes areas such as personal health problems, school health problems, nutrition, health administration, and biology 2. School health services: Includes areas such as nursing assessment, clinical management, health teaching and counseling, and community nursing 6 hours in English and 6 in social sciences
General academic courses	40 sem. hrs. of credit	
Major	Not specified	---
Professional Education	Total semester hours of credit: 36	
	1. Foundations of ed.: Yes	Includes areas such as: Philosophy of education, history of education, comparative education, principles of education, and community sociology, community resources, and social anthropology
	2. Ed. psychology: Yes	Includes areas such as: Psychology of learning, human growth and development, child adolescent psychology, and mental hygiene
	3. Curriculum & methods: Yes	Includes areas such as: Methods of teaching, teaching of reading, school library media instruction, individualizing instruction, educational measurements, principles of curriculum construction, curriculum at a particular level or specific to one field, and extra-curricular activities
	4. Field experience: Yes, 6-12 sem. hrs. of credit	In a public health agency or in student teaching of health
	5. Special education: Yes, 36 clock hours	Same as for most other teaching endorsements
Source of data: R.C.S.A. Sec. 10-145d-547 to -550, inclusive		

Trade and Industrial Occupations Endorsement

When: Teachers of a trade and industrial occupation, for which there is no provision within existing teacher preparation programs, in comprehensive high schools (e.g., automotive servicing, building maintenance); not valid in the vocational-technical school system.

Endorsements are issued for a particular specialty within the field.

Education: High school diploma or equivalent

Experience: Three years appropriate to the specialty, with up to two years of specialized appropriate schooling to be accepted toward fulfillment of requirement

Test: None

Applicant must either meet these requirements (above and below) and have the district request a certificate from SDE, or hold or be eligible for a home or vocational home economics certificate and have a minimum of six months of approved successful work experience in the field.

<i>Type of Requirement</i>	<i>General Topic & Semester Hrs. of Credit</i>	<i>Specific Topics/Areas To Be Covered</i>
Area-specific courses	None specified	--
General academic courses	45 sem. hrs. of credit	Including: 6 hours in English, 6 hours in social science (which must include U.S. history), and study in at least three of these six areas, in addition to the area of major: English, mathematics, science, social science, foreign language, and fine arts
Major	Any major, or 39 sem. hrs. of credit interdisciplinary major with at least 18 sem. hrs. in any one subject	Interdisciplinary major must have remainder of its courses distributed among no more than three additional subjects related to area of concentration
Professional Education	Total semester hours of credit: 6	
	1. Foundations of ed.: Possibly	See below
	2. Ed. psychology: Possibly	See below
	3. Curriculum & methods: Yes	Must complete 6 hours in either: 1) Teaching vocational and industrial education; or 2) Foundations of education, educational psychology, adolescent psychology, psychology of learning, curriculum and methods of teaching, classroom instruction and management, and multicultural diversity or equity issues in education
	4. Field experience: No, not in addition to required job experience	---
	5. Special education: Yes,	Same as for most other teaching endorsements; 36 clock hours
Source of data: R.C.S.A. Sec. 10-145d-495 to -499, inclusive		

Agriculture Education Occupational Endorsement

When: Teacher of agriculture or aquaculture, including classes for adults
 Education: Bachelor's degree
 Experience: One year of agriculture or aquaculture experience
 Test: None

<i>Type of Requirement</i>	<i>General Topic & Semester Hrs. of Credit</i>	<i>Specific Topics/Areas To Be Covered</i>
Area-specific courses	Study in each of four areas	At either the undergraduate or graduate levels, must have studied each of these areas: curriculum; psychology, including human growth and development, understanding human behavior, personality, and mental hygiene; measurement and evaluation; and children's or adolescent literature
General academic courses	None specified	---
Major	In agriculture or aquaculture	---
Professional Education	Total semester hours of credit: 6; must be in vocational technical education and education psychology	
	1. Foundations of ed.: Yes	---
	2. Ed. psychology: Yes	Also areas such as adolescent psychology and psychology of learning
	3. Curriculum & methods: Yes	Areas such as classroom instruction and management, and multicultural diversity or equity issues in education
	4. Field experience: No	---
	5. Special education: Yes, 36 clock hours	Same as for most other teaching endorsements
Source of data: R.C.S.A. Sec. 10-145d-485 to -489, inclusive		

Marketing Education Endorsement

When: Teacher of cooperative classes in marketing education
 Education: Bachelor's degree
 Experience: One year in a marketing field, or participation in a cooperative part-time college-level program
 Test: None at initial level

<i>Type of Requirement</i>	<i>General Topic & Semester Hrs. of Credit</i>	<i>Specific Topics/Areas To Be Covered</i>
Area-specific courses	15 sem. hrs. of credit in marketing fields	Examples of marketing fields are merchandising, promotion, store organization, management, and marketing
General academic courses	None specified	---
Major	None specified	---
Professional Education	Total semester hours of credit: 6	
	1. Foundations of ed.: Yes	1) Teaching vocational and industrial education; or
	2. Ed. psychology: Yes	2) Foundations of education, educational psychology, adolescent psychology, psychology of learning, curriculum and methods of teaching, classroom instruction and management, and multicultural diversity or equity issues in education
	3. Curriculum & methods: Yes	---
	4. Field experience: No, not in addition to required job experience	
	5. Special education: Yes, 36 clock hours	Same as for most other teaching endorsements
Source of data: R.C.S.A. Sec. 10-145d-500 to -503, inclusive		

Appendix C

Cross-Endorsements

When: Teachers or teacher candidates who want to obtain additional endorsements that would allow them to teach in additional subject areas

Education: Bachelor's degree

Test: Passing score(s) on the appropriate Praxis II or other tests, detailed in other tables

<i>Endorsement Area</i>	<i>Additional Coursework Required</i>
<u>Early Childhood</u>	Full coursework as detailed in "Early Childhood Endorsement" table
<u>Elementary Education</u>	30 sem. hrs. of credit specifically related to elementary education, including 6 hours in language arts (which may include reading, writing, speaking, listening, and spelling) and 6 sem. hrs. in child growth and development
<u>Most Middle Grades</u>	15 sem. hrs. of credit in subject area for which endorsement is sought and 12 sem. hrs. in coursework specific to middle level methods and instruction. Exceptions and additions noted below.
English	Include coursework in secondary developmental reading, advanced composition beyond the college freshman level, and English language (including history and grammar)
History/ Social Studies	9 sem. hrs. of credit in history, including U.S. history, western civilization or European history, and nonwestern history, and coursework in at least 3 of the following areas: political science, economics, geography, sociology, anthropology, or psychology
Mathematics	Include study in calculus
Science	Under the integrated science interdisciplinary major, instead, a concentration in one area of science of at least 9 sem. hrs. of credit including one lab course, and coursework in each of the other three areas of science with one lab course in each area
<u>Most Secondary Academic</u>	Major or 30 sem. hrs. of credit in subject area for which endorsement is sought, of which 6 sem. hrs. may be in curriculum and instruction in subject area. Exceptions and additions noted below.
Art or Music	Major
English	Coursework in secondary developmental reading, advanced composition beyond college freshman level, and English language (including history and grammar)
Foreign Language	6 sem. hrs. of credit including coursework in methods and materials for teaching foreign language and in language acquisition (is satisfied by past or current completion of Alternate Route to Certification program), and either: 1. 24 sem. hrs. of credit in the foreign language, if coursework was started at the intermediate level; or 2. 12 sem. hrs. of credit, if coursework was started at the advanced level
General Science	Major in any one area of science, or, 30 sem. hrs. of credit distributed among biology, chemistry, earth science, and physics, and including coursework in science curriculum and instruction

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Appendix D

Table D-1. Certificates Granted to Out-of-State Teachers		
	<i>From State that has NASDTEC Teacher Agreement with CT¹</i>	<i>From State Without CT NASDTEC Agreement</i>
<i>Bachelor's degree and either:</i>		
<i>1.) Completion of a teacher preparation program but no teaching experience; or</i>		
<i>2.) No completion of a teacher preparation program, but experience of:</i>		
<i>a) In a state that has a NASDTEC teacher agreement with CT: 27 to less than 30 school months of full-time teaching experience under a full certificate</i>		
<i>b) In a state without a NASDTEC teacher agreement with CT: 20 to less than 30 school months of full-time teaching experience in the same public or approved non-public school under a full certificate</i>		
Meets coursework and testing requirements	Initial ²	Initial
Has testing deficiency	Interim Initial	Interim Initial
Has special ed. coursework deficiency	Does not exist: Initial	Interim Initial
Has other coursework deficiency	Does not exist: Initial	Cannot be certified until deficiency is remedied
<i>At least 30 school months of full-time teaching experience under a full certificate^{3, 4}</i>		
Meets coursework and testing requirements	Provisional	Provisional
Has testing deficiency	Interim Provisional	Interim Provisional
Has special ed. coursework deficiency	Does not exist: Provisional	Interim Provisional
Has other coursework deficiency	Does not exist: Provisional	Cannot be certified until deficiency is remedied
Has not taught for at least 3 of last 10 school years	Initial	Initial
<i>National Board-certified⁵</i>		
Meets coursework and testing requirements, and has 30 credits beyond bachelor's degree	Professional	Professional
Has testing deficiency	Does not exist: Professional	Does not exist: Professional
Has special ed. coursework deficiency	Does not exist: Professional	Does not exist: Professional
Has other coursework deficiency	Does not exist: Professional	Does not exist: Professional
Lacks 30 credits beyond bachelor's degree	Provisional	Provisional
Has not taught for 3 of last 10 school years	Initial	Initial
¹ The NASDTEC agreement waives all coursework requirements due to the sending state's sufficient		

preparation program approval process and certification requirements, as determined by the receiving state.

² The NASDTEC agreement states that teachers who have 27 months of successful full-time teaching experience under a full certification (equivalent to Connecticut's regular initial or provisional certificates) are eligible for certification in the receiving state, regardless of their teacher preparation. (This provision essentially makes a difference only for teachers who went through other states' alternate route programs and then taught for at least 27 months under the full licenses, since Connecticut does not accept other states' alternate route programs as sufficient preparation. Completing all required coursework is a prerequisite in any state for receiving full certification.)

³ A teacher who has several years of experience but is not National Board-certified must begin with the provisional certificate. The teacher must teach for at least three years in Connecticut under a provisional certificate (and have earned 30 post-baccalaureate credits) before receiving a professional certificate.

⁴ Connecticut requires teachers who have not successfully completed its beginning teacher program (i.e., those teaching in private schools or out of state) to have taught for 30 months before receiving a provisional certificate. Consequently, an out-of-state teacher who has taught for less than 30 months under a full certificate would receive an initial certificate in Connecticut and therefore would enter the beginning educator program.

⁵ National Board-certified teachers are exempt from Connecticut's testing and coursework certification requirements (excepting the requirement to obtain 30 post-baccalaureate credits to attain a professional certificate).

Source of data: SDE

Appendix E

**Table E-1. Connecticut's NASDTEC Interstate Agreements
Regarding Educator Certifications**

<i>State</i>	<i>Teachers</i>	<i>Support Staff</i>	<i>Vocational Ed.</i>	<i>Administrators</i>
Alabama	X	X	--	--
Alaska	--	--	--	--
Arizona	--	--	--	--
Arkansas	X	--	--	--
California	X	--	--	--
Colorado	X	--	--	--
Delaware	X	--	--	--
D.C.	X	--	--	--
Florida	X	--	--	--
Georgia	X	--	--	--
Hawaii	X	--	--	--
Idaho	X	--	--	--
Illinois	X	--	--	--
Indiana	X	--	--	--
Iowa	--	--	--	--
Kansas	--	--	--	--
Kentucky	X	--	--	--
Louisiana	--	--	--	--
Maine	X	--	--	--
Maryland	X	X	--	--
Massachusetts	X	X	--	--
Michigan	X	--	--	--
Minnesota	--	--	--	--
Mississippi	X	--	--	--
Missouri	--	--	--	--
Montana	X	--	--	--
Nebraska	--	--	--	--
Nevada	X	--	--	--
New Hampshire	X	--	--	--
New Jersey	X	--	--	--
New Mexico	X	--	--	--
New York	X	X	X	--
North Carolina	X	X	X	--
North Dakota	--	--	--	--
Ohio	X	--	--	--
Oklahoma	X	--	--	--
Oregon	X	--	--	--
Pennsylvania	X	--	--	--
Rhode Island	X	X	X	---
South Carolina	X	X	X	--
South Dakota	--	--	--	--
Tennessee	X	--	--	--
Texas	X	--	--	--

Utah	X	X	X	--
Vermont	X	--	--	--
Virginia	X	--	--	--
Washington	X	X	X	--
West Virginia	X	X	X	--
Wyoming	--	--	--	--
Source of data: SDE, "Certification for Out-of-State Applicants – Fact Sheet #106," http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2613&q=321284				

Appendix F

Certification in the Northeast

This appendix describes certification requirements in the following Northeastern states: Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont. The requirements are presented in two formats: an overview of requirements by level of certification in Table F-1, to allow for easy comparison across states; and overviews of certification requirements in each state in Tables F-2 through F-4, to provide for simple viewing of a state's requirements. Information was gathered by committee staff's conversations with certification directors and staff in all states except Rhode Island (which was unresponsive to several requests) and research on the states' certification websites.

Table F-1. Certification Requirements Across the Northeast	
<i>Level I</i>	All
<i>Special coursework</i>	Health or biology (passing score on exam in areas is accepted in lieu of coursework): NJ Special education: CT, ME, MA (only early childhood ed. and elem. ed.), NY, RI, VT U.S. history: CT None: NH
<i>Assessment</i>	Praxis I: CT, ME, MA, NH, NJ, VT Praxis II: CT, ME, NH (some areas), NJ, RI, VT State-specific test: MA (content, and communications and literacy), NY (content, liberal arts and sciences, and teaching skills)
<i>Fee</i>	\$50 if completed preparation at an in-state, approved program, \$100 if completed preparation at out-of-state program (including in NIA state), or in-state but not approved; and \$95 for fingerprinting: NY \$100: CT, ME, MA, RI (plus \$25 if evaluation of coursework is necessary) Additional fee per endorsement: ME (\$35), MA (\$25), RI (\$100) \$130: NH Additional fee per endorsement: NH (\$20) \$160: VT \$170, plus \$20 for each endorsement (including first) requiring Praxis II: NJ
<i>Valid</i>	Two years: ME, NJ Three years: CT, NH, VT Five years: MA, NY, RI
<i>Renewable</i>	No: CT No, but one-year extension available: NY (either has not taught under certificate for five years, or if has taught and completed 24 semester hours of graduate credit) Yes, twice; \$70 each time Yes, if not taught under: ME, NH (but must have completed 75 hrs. continuing education), VT Yes, if not finished professional development plan: ME, MA (once only)

	Yes, unlimited number of times (is highest-level certificate): RI
<u>Level II</u>	All except Rhode Island
<i>Education</i>	None: CT (but further education is required for mandatory move to Level III), ME (but further education is required for optional move to Level III), NJ, VT Master's degree: NY Master's degree or other options (12 credits if already have master's; state-approved program; or National Board certification): MA Continuing education: NH
<i>Experience (Minimum)</i>	One year: CT, NJ Two years: ME, VT Three years: MA, NH, NY
<i>Assessment</i>	CT (BEST portfolio) None: ME, MA (in statute as option in lieu of education, but has not been developed), NH, NJ (optional completion of district induction program), NY, VT
<i>Fee</i>	\$0: NJ (unless coming from another state with experience and therefore enter at provisional level; then, fee is same as for Level I certificate) \$50 if completed preparation at an in-state, approved program, \$100 if completed preparation at out-of-state program (including in NIA state), or in-state but not approved: NY \$100: ME, MA (plus \$25 per additional endorsement) \$130: NH (plus \$20 per additional endorsement) \$200: CT \$320: VT
<i>Valid</i>	Three years: NH Five years: ME, MA, NJ, NY Seven years: VT Eight years: CT
<i>Renewable</i>	No: CT Yes, for unlimited number of times: ME, MA, NH, NY, VT
<u>Level III</u>	Mandatory: CT Optional: ME (no one has attained since introduced in 1998), NH None: MA, NY, RI, VT
<i>Education</i>	30 hours of credit: CT Master's degree: NH None: ME
<i>Experience (Minimum)</i>	Three years under Level II: CT, ME Four years under Level II: NH
<i>Assessment</i>	None: CT Through 2008 - completion of professional development plan; starting 2009 – National Board certification or meeting National Board standards: ME Several components: Written exercises, in-classroom observations by state, and either National Board certification or evaluations by range of people: NH
<i>Fee</i>	\$100: ME \$250 if opt for National Board certification; \$800 if not: NH \$300: CT
<i>Valid</i>	Three years: NH Five years: CT, ME

<i>Renewable</i>	Yes, for unlimited number of times: CT, ME, NH
<i>Highest-level renewal fee</i>	No: CT, NJ (except for non-citizens, who pay \$95), NY Yes: ME (\$100), MA (\$100 plus \$25 for each additional endorsement), NH (\$130 plus \$20 for each additional endorsement), RI (\$100 for each endorsement), VT (\$280)
<i>Continuing Ed. (class time)</i>	90 hours over five years, or <u>18</u> hours per year: CT, ME 135 hours over seven years, or about <u>19.28</u> hours per year: VT (at least one-third in content area) 100 hours over five years, or <u>20</u> hours per year: NJ 75 hours over three years, or <u>25</u> hours per year: NH (30 in content area, 45 in areas furthering understanding of teaching standards) 150 hours over five years, or <u>30</u> hours per year: MA (90 hours in content, 30 in content or content-related pedagogy, 30 in any area) 175 hours over five years, or <u>35</u> hours per year: NY (new requirement) (RI: Information not available)
<i>Reciprocity</i>	NASDTEC Interstate Agreement: All Graduated from an NCATE-accredited program: Massachusetts

Table F-2. Certification Requirements in Connecticut, Maine, and Massachusetts			
	<i>Connecticut</i>	<i>Maine</i>	<i>Massachusetts</i>
Level I	Initial	Provisional	Initial
Special coursework	Special ed. and U.S. history courses (one each)	Special ed.	Special ed. for ECE, el. ed., and moderate special ed. teachers
Assessment	Praxis I and II	Praxis I and Praxis II	Praxis I and state-specific test (content, and Communications & Literacy; developed by Pearson)
Fee	\$100	\$100, with added \$35 for each endorsement beyond the first (plus \$55 for criminal check)	\$100, plus \$25 for each additional endorsement area
Valid	Three years	Two years	Five years
Renewable	No	Yes, if have not taught under it or if local certification committee recommends extension because the teacher's professional development plan has not been completed	Yes, once; must submit that has been employed and a plan for meeting the education requirement of professional certificate; \$25 to renew
Level II	Provisional	Professional	Professional
Education	No difference	No difference	One of following: 1) If already holds degree above bachelor's, additional graduate-level credits (9-12) in field or 12-credit state-approved program for the professional license (with 9 credits in content area) 2) If does not, then master's degree, either in field or in ed. with at least 12 credit hours in field 3) Approved state-approved program for the professional license of 50 hrs., content-based 4) National Board certification 5) Pass state performance assessment, when available (currently is not)
Experience	At least one year under Level I certificate (1-3 years)	At least two years under Level I certificate (2 years)	At least three years under Level I certificate (3-10 years), including district's attestation that mentoring program was completed in year one (as were 50 additional hours of mentoring)
Assessment	Complete beginning teacher program (BEST)	None	None

	Connecticut	Maine	Massachusetts
Fee	\$200	\$100 (regardless of number of endorsements)	\$100, plus \$25 for each additional endorsement area
Valid	Eight years	Five years	Five years
Renewable	No	Yes, unlimited (same fee)	Yes, unlimited (same fee)
Level III	Professional	Master (optional)	None
Education	30 credits beyond bachelor's degree	None required	---
Experience	3-8 years under Level II certificate (in total, 5-11 years)	5 years teaching in Maine (regardless of certificate level)	---
Assessment	None	Through 2008: Completed a professional development plan determined by local certification committee. Starting 2009: Either attained National Board Certification or met standards similar to those required by National Board Certification process	---
Fee	\$300	\$100 (regardless of number of endorsements)	---
Valid	Five years	Five years	---
Renewable	Yes, unlimited	Yes, unlimited	---
Highest-level renewal fee	No	Yes, \$100	Yes, \$100 plus \$25 for each additional endorsement
Continuing Ed. (class time)	90 clock hours over 5 years	90 clock hours over 5 years	150 clock hours (or equivalent) over 5 years (90 hours in content area, 30 hours in either content or content-related pedagogy, and 30 in any area; at least 10 hours in any topic to get credit for that topic)
Reciprocity	NIA	NIA	NIA and NCATE

Note:

Massachusetts: The state also has preliminary license. To earn a preliminary license, one must have a bachelor's degree, passed the state test (both communication and content), and have completed certain coursework if the field will be early childhood education, elementary education, or special education. This license is valid for five years and is not renewable, so during that time, the teacher must complete an approved teacher preparation program in order to move up to an initial license. Preparation programs are offered by higher education institutes and by seven districts approved by the department. Any district can go through the application process.

Table F-3. Certification Requirements in New Hampshire, New Jersey, and New York				
	New Hampshire		New Jersey	
	Beginning Educator		Provisional	Initial
Level I <i>Special coursework</i>	None		Either a biology or health course of at least one credit, or passing an exam in physiology and hygiene	Special education coursework
<i>Assessment</i>	Praxis I and, for most areas, Praxis II (both requirements waived if have 7 years' experience under a Level I certificate in another state; Praxis I and, if in subject, Praxis II waived if have master's degree)		Praxis I and II, and examination in physiology and hygiene	New York State Teacher Certification Examination (Liberal Arts & Sciences, Assessment of Teaching Skills -Written, and Content Specialty Test)
<i>Fee</i>	\$130; \$20 for each endorsement beyond the first		\$170 plus \$20 for each endorsement requiring Praxis II assessment (including the first)	\$50 if attended a NY-approved teacher preparation program, or \$100 if attended any other program (including in an NIA state); and \$95 for fingerprinting
Valid	Three years		Two years	Five years
<i>Renewable</i>	Yes, if have not been employed for three years under the certificate, but must have completed 75 clock hours of continuing education (with at least 30 hours in each endorsement area)		Yes, twice, for \$70 each time	No, but one-year extension possible if haven't taught for three years, or if has taught and has 24 semester hours of graduate study but could not complete education requirement for professional certificate, due to personal hardship. \$50 fee.
Level II <i>Education</i>	Experienced Educator		Standard	Professional
	Continuing education, as described below: monitored and administered by district		No additional requirements	Master's degree fitting one of the following categories: 1. Leading to a teaching certificate (if did not complete a preparation program) 2. In endorsement area, or related area 3. If not in endorsement area, or related area, must include at least 12 semester hours in endorsement area

	<i>New Hampshire</i>	<i>New Jersey</i>	<i>New York</i>
Experience	Either three years under a beginning educator certificate, or clinical experience of one year as part of a completed approved graduate program	One year	Three years
Assessment	None	Optional: Completion of a district/school induction program (or, graduation from approved TPP and one year of full-time teaching under the provisional certificate)	None
Fee	\$130; \$20 for each endorsement beyond the first	None (if person from another state is entering at Level II, will have to pay Level I fee)	\$50 if teacher has met education requirement through a master's degree at NY-approved program; \$100 if met in another way
Valid	Three years	Five years	Five years
Renewable	Yes, unlimited	Yes, unlimited	Yes, unlimited
Level III	Master Teacher (has not been sought in the 5-7 years it has been an option)	None	None
Education	Master's degree	---	---
Experience	Seven years full-time of the last ten	---	---
Assessment	1. Four written tasks and exercises evaluated by education department 2. Three in-person classroom observations by education department 3. If not National Board-certified, also: evaluations by students, parents, peers, and administrators; and education department considers whether teacher meets professional standards	---	---
Fee	\$250 if National Board-certified; \$800 if not	---	---
Valid	Three years	---	---
Renewable	Yes; same renewal fee as other certificates	---	---
Highest-level renewal fee?	Yes	No	No

Notes:

New Hampshire: Continuing education requirements must be met to renew a certificate, regardless of whether the educator has been employed by a district over the last three-year cycle. If someone is employed, the district is supposed to submit evidence that the teacher completed the continuing education; if not, the teacher is supposed to do it (along with a plan, before carrying out the continuing education). The master teacher option was first created by the legislature effective August 1998, but so far has never been used. The Bureau of Credentialing administrator reported that neither districts nor the state gives teachers any incentive to earn and hold a master certificate that might outweigh the high cost.

New Jersey: The state issues a Certificate of Eligibility with Advanced Standing or, to alternate route graduates, a Certificate of Eligibility or to someone who has not yet accepted an offer of employment. The Certificate is not a teaching license. When an offer has been accepted, and the district has agreed to provide an induction program, the teacher must then apply for a provisional certificate. The certification fee is due when someone applies for a Certificate of Eligibility (with or without Advanced Standing). An alternate route graduate must pay an additional \$100 to defray the cost of completing the alternate route regional training center program.

New York: The certificate structure changed in 2004. The entry-level certificate used to be called a provisional certificate; it is now an initial certificate. The second-level certificate was formerly a lifetime certificate; the educator didn't have to do anything to get it renewed, because there was no renewal. There may have been continuing education requirements imposed on an educator by a district, or educators just took continuing education because they wanted to, but there was no requirement to complete continuing education, to keep certification. The continuing education requirement isn't truly effective until the first person has held a professional certificate for five years after the requirement changed, which will be in 2010. Consequently, the department hasn't yet had to check for the completion of continuing education, in any way.

Table F-4. Certification Requirements in Rhode Island and Vermont			
	<i>Rhode Island</i>		<i>Vermont</i>
Level I	Professional		Level One
Special coursework	Special education		Special education
Education/Continuing Ed. (class time)	Yes, amount unclear. (Website information on amount was conflicting and the department failed to respond to several requests for information.)		None
Assessment	Praxis II		Praxis I and II
Fee	\$100 for each field		\$160
Valid	Five years		Three years
Renewable	Yes		Yes, if have not been employed under certificate for two years (must have completed 45 continuing education clock hours to renew); \$160 to renew
Level II	None		Level Two
Education	---		None
Experience	---		At least two years under Level I certificate (local standards board decides whether teacher may move to Level Two after two years or after three, based on perception of performance)
Assessment	---		None
Fee	---		\$320; \$280 to renew
Valid	---		Seven years
Renewable	---		Yes
Level III	None		None
Education	---		---
Experience	---		---
Assessment	---		---
Fee	---		---
Valid	---		---
Renewable	---		---

	<i>Rhode Island</i>	<i>Vermont</i>
<i>Highest-level renewal fee?</i>	Yes: \$100	Yes: \$280
<i>Continuing Ed. (class time)</i>	See above	135 clock hours (9 credits) over seven years, with at least one-third (3 credits) in the endorsement area. If more than one endorsement: at least 45 hours (3 credits) in each endorsement area.
<i>Reciprocity</i>	NIA	NIA

Notes:

Rhode Island: The state considers its first-level certificate to be the Certificate of Eligibility for Employment (CEE). The CEE is given to someone who meets all the requirements to be a teacher (including Praxis II) but has not yet been hired as one. So, once the teacher is hired, it is necessary to apply for a professional certificate, and that is the only certificate available to hired teachers.

Vermont: To issue a certificate, Vermont requires evidence a prospective teacher either is a resident or has a job offer from an in-state school.

Appendix G

Table G-1. Certificate Issued When Initial Educator Certificate Has Expired or Will Soon Expire		
<i>Teaching Experience And Current Certification Status</i>	<i>Certificate Issued (and Duration)</i>	<i>Terms</i>
<i>Has never taught</i>		
Currently holds certification	Initial (three years)	Five re-issuances granted, after which applicant must meet all current requirements for initial certification.
Expired certification	Initial (three years)	Applicant must meet all current requirements for initial certification, and application for re-issuance is either: 1) Made within 5 years of expiration date of first initial certificate; or 2) Made more than 5 years after expiration date of first initial certificate, and applicant must have completed 3 semester hours in education technology and 3 hours in alternative student assessment or child/adolescent development.
<i>Has taught in assignment that was part-time, less than 10 school months, or not long enough to complete BEST assessment</i>		
Currently holds certification	Initial (three years)	Upon recommendation of district
Expired certification	Initial (three years)	Upon recommendation of district, and either: 1) Made within 5 years of expiration date of first initial certificate and applicant must meet all assessment requirements in effect except BEST; or 2) Made more than 5 years after expiration date of first initial certificate, and applicant must meet all current requirements for initial certification and have completed 3 semester hours in education technology and 3 hours in alternative student assessment or child/adolescent development.

<i>Has taught and has/held a certificate with an endorsement in an area/field where bachelor's degree is not required, and has not fulfilled initial certificate's requirement of assessment or special education course of study</i>		
Currently holds certification	Initial (three years)	None
Expired certification	Initial (three years)	Either: 1) Made within 5 years of expiration date of first initial certificate and applicant must meet all assessment requirements in effect except BEST; or 2) Made more than 5 years after expiration date of first initial certificate, and applicant must meet all current requirements for initial certification and have completed 3 semester hours in education technology and 3 hours in alternative student assessment or child/adolescent development.
<i>Has taught but has not successfully completed BEST, and district has requested extension</i>		
Currently holds certification	Initial (as necessary to complete BEST; usually one year)	Must be finding of good cause by Commissioner and extension may be made only once
Expired certification	Initial	Either: 1) Made within 5 years of expiration date of first initial certification, and must be finding of good cause by Commissioner and a request by district, and extension may be made only once; or 2) Made more than 5 years after expiration date of first initial certificate, and applicant must meet all current requirements for initial certification and have completed 3 semester hours in education technology and 3 hours in alternative student assessment or child/adolescent development.
<i>Has taught but has not successfully completed BEST, and district has <u>not</u> requested extension</i>		
Currently holds certification	None	---
Expired certification	Initial (three years)	May be eligible for re-issuance if applicant: 1) Submits evidence of required intervening study and experience; 2) Meets all current requirements for initial certification; and 3) Has completed 3 semester hours in education technology and 3 hours in alternative student assessment or child/adolescent development.

Table G-2. Certificate Issued When Provisional Educator Certificate Has Expired	
Certificate Issued in Listed Situations	Duration
Provisional (Renewal)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Successfully taught under provisional certificate for the school year immediately preceding the date of application [for less than 8 years]• Meets all current initial and provisional certification requirements	8 years less the time the applicant taught under the provisional certificate during the 10 years immediately preceding the date of application
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Successfully taught under provisional certificate for at least 3 but less than 8 years, during 10 years immediately preceding the date of application• Meets all current initial and provisional certification requirements• Has not fulfilled coursework requirement for professional educator certificate	
Initial	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Had never taught under provisional certificate	Three years
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Had not taught for at least 3 years during the 10 years immediately preceding the date of application	Three years
None	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Successfully taught under provisional certificate for 8 or more years during 10 years immediately preceding date of application• Has not fulfilled coursework requirement for professional educator certificate	---
Source: R.C.S.A. Sec. 10-145d-427	

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Praxis Panel Standards-Setting Process

The details of the Praxis panel standards-setting process are different for multiple choice and essay tests, but standards-setting for both types of assessments involves training and using the same criteria. The panel's process for setting a multiple choice test standard is described because most of Connecticut's certification tests are in that format.

Training consists primarily of learning the criteria to be used in evaluating the test and working through sample test items. After training, the panel begins the standards-setting process.

1. Individual evaluations are conducted: Each panelist gives two separate evaluations of every test item's "job relevance" and "knowledge estimation," considering both the test question and set of response options. The *job relevance* determination requires the panelist to determine how important the knowledge tested by the question is for the job of a beginning teacher, based on a standardized rating scale ranging from "not important" to "very important." The *knowledge estimation* evaluation entails approximating the percent of "just-sufficient" beginning teachers who would know the answer to the question. Panelists are instructed to exclude from their estimation those beginning teachers who fall well short of sufficiency and those who far exceed it. After working through the test, the panelists estimate the job relevance of the content areas covered by the test questions (i.e., test specifications).

2. Check to ensure state's job relevance test standards are met: Every state using a certification assessment sets the two *job relevance* standards that all such tests must meet in order to be adopted, called decision rules. Connecticut's decision rules are set by SDE and are based on what seems intuitively reasonable. Connecticut's Praxis II decision rules are:

- at least 70 percent of all the test's panelists agree that *each* item is job-relevant; and
- *all* the test's panelists agree that at least 80 percent of *all* the test's items are job-relevant.

There are also borderline validity decision rules that a strong majority of states and state agencies choose to adopt. Connecticut's borderline validity decision rules are 65 percent at the item level, and 70 percent at the test level. As noted in Section IV, Connecticut had the highest decision rules of the 49 states and state agencies that used Praxis II assessments in 2004 (the most recent data available), shown in Table H-1.

Table H-1. Job Relevance Decision Rules Across States for Praxis II (Subject Assessments)		
	<i>Item-Level: Number of States Using Rule Level</i>	<i>Test-Level: Number of States Using Rule Level</i>
<i>Primary Rule</i>		
75-80%	0	12 (CT)
70-74%	9 (CT)	24
65-69%	11	5
60-64%	4	6
55-59%	0	0
51-54%	2	2
<i>Distance of Borderline Rule from Primary Rule*</i>		
None	3	5
5-9% points	16 (CT)	4
10-15% points	19	28 (CT)
16-20% points	10	10
21-25%	0	2
<p>*Generally, states that have higher percentage point distances between the primary rule and borderline rule are those that have higher primary rules. Source of data: ETS, "Job Relevance Decision Rules for Praxis II Subject Assessments," September 30, 2004.</p>		

In addition to test- and item-level job relevance, the panelists' aggregate judgment of the content areas' job relevance is to be considered, but there is no standard that must be met. If the state's decision rules are not met, or if the content areas' job relevance is judged to be lacking, then the test is not adopted.

3. Recommended passing score is determined: The recommended passing score is computed by identifying the questions judged to be *job relevant* and averaging the *knowledge estimation* judgments across panelists. That preliminary score is then adjusted by ETS into a scaled, final score. Specifically, the preliminary score is adjusted upward to account for the 25 percent chance that any test taker did not know the correct answer but guessed it, but also is adjusted downward to lower the chance that a person who should have passed the test, did not. The resulting score is covered into a scaled score that ranges from 100-200 for most tests.

Appendix I

Praxis I and II Passing Rates

Table I-1. Basic Skills Test (Praxis I) Passing Rates: 1994-2008									
<i>Test Area</i>	<i>June 1994 – Dec. 2000</i>			<i>Sept. 2000-Aug. 2005</i>			<i>Sept. 2005-Aug. 2008</i>		
	<i>Initial Pass Rate</i>	<i>Final Pass Rate</i>	<i>N*</i>	<i>Initial Pass Rate</i>	<i>Final Pass Rate</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Initial Pass Rate</i>	<i>Final Pass Rate</i>	<i>N</i>
Mathematics	77%	85%	16,110	79%	86%	19,829	78%	84%	9,592
Reading	89%	92%	16,198	84%	89%	19,178	82%	86%	9,428
Writing	87%	91%	16,055	88%	92%	18,537	87%	90%	9,101
All Three Components	69%	78%	15,642	72%	83%	17,311	72%	81%	8,437
* “N” is the total number of potential educators who took the test. Source of data: SDE									

Table I-2. Subject Area Test (Praxis II) Passing Rates: 1994-2008

Test Area (# of tests)	June 1994 – Dec. 2000			Sept. 2000–Aug. 2005			Sept. 2005–Aug. 2008		
	Initial Pass Rate	Final Pass Rate	N*	Initial Pass Rate	Final Pass Rate	N	Initial Pass Rate	Final Pass Rate	N
Art (3)	77%	93%	344	73%	88%	590	82%	95%	353
Biology (1)	80%	90%	592	73%	84%	1,045	77%	88%	603
Business Ed. (1)	77%	83%	583	76%	87%	399	78%	88%	187
Chemistry (2)	87%	92%	284	75%	86%	312	69%	80%	189
Earth Science (1)	82%	88%	106	83%	90%	199	70%	80%	114
Elementary Ed. (2)	66%	88%	4,811	75%	91%	7,869	80%	96%	3,531
English Lang. Arts (ELA), 7-12 (2)	75%	86%	1,885	51%	73%	1,772	46%	71%	1,185
General Science (2)	100%	100%	194	40%	64%	546	43%	68%	315
Health Ed. (1)	88%	93%	1,171	66%	81%	696	64%	81%	544
Home Economics (1)	82%	88%	208	81%	88%	137	72%	84%	74
Mathematics, 7-12 (1)**	51%	70%	540	57%	74%	1,568	61%	78%	1,080
Mid. School: ELA (1)	87%	94%	135	80%	88%	317	84%	89%	222
Mid. School: Science (1)	60%	76%	95	56%	72%	290	56%	69%	149
Mid. School: Soc. St. (1)	83%	88%	169	78%	85%	289	82%	85%	176
Mid. School: Math. (1)	72%	80%	127	65%	76%	611	61%	73%	492
Music (2)	55%	84%	399	62%	86%	702	60%	84%	366
Physical Ed. (2)	51%	85%	669	70%	89%	733	75%	92%	497
Physics (2)	84%	91%	97	75%	87%	174	81%	89%	95
Social Studies, 7-12 (1)	77%	91%	1,884	68%	81%	2,128	63%	77%	1,449
Special Ed. (2)	57%	84%	1,805	NA	NA	NA	91%	97%	1,477
Technology Ed. (2)	85%	90%	268	80%	90%	193	71%	85%	115

**“N” is the total number of test-takers.

**The math passing score was lowered in November 2001 by the State Board of Education.

“NA”: The special education test was updated during the timeframe and so no consistent passing rate data were available.

Notes: The dates used were based on available data. SDE had obtained data for June 1994-December 2000, and for September 2000-August 2005, prior to this study; data for the most recent period (September 2005-August 2008) Praxis examinations were requested of SDE by committee staff.

Data on the foreign language tests, which are administered by a different organization (ACTFL – the American Council on Teaching Foreign Languages), were not available. To be eligible for Connecticut certification, foreign language teachers must meet the “intermediate high” standard on both the oral and written portions of the ACTFL test.

Assessments that are no longer required for Connecticut certification are not included.

Source of data: SDE

Appendix J

Connecticut's Praxis Standards

When examining Praxis passing scores across states, it is important to note that each state sets its Praxis standard for every test based on the state's educators' assessments of how important and widely known among beginning teachers is the knowledge on that particular test. This standards-setting process is used because it is legally defensible.

Table J-1. Connecticut's Minimum Praxis Test Scores Compared to National and Regional Minimum Scores						
	<i>CT</i>	<i>Nat'l Median</i>	<i>Nat'l Range</i>	<i>Number of States</i>	<i>Northeastern States (NY and MA do not use)</i>	
Praxis I						
Reading	172	173.5	170-178	26	ME-173 NJ-175	NH-174 VT-177
Writing	171	172	171-175	26	ME-172 NJ-173	NH-172 VT-174
Mathematics	171	172	169-177	26	ME-172 NJ-174	NH-172 VT-175
Praxis II						
Art Making	148	154	146-161	8	VT-148	
Art: Content, Traditions, etc.	130	140	130-145	6	None	
Art: Content Knowledge (CK)	157	156	139-170	31	ME-151	
Biology: CK	152	150	139-157	28	ME-150 VT-151	NH-153
Business Ed.	620	575	480-620	28	None	
Chemistry: CK	151	152	135-160	27	NH-153 VT-160	NJ-152
Chemistry: Content Essays (CE)	140	142.5	140-150	4	NH-153 VT-160	NJ-152
Earth Sci.: CK	157	150	136-158	24	NH-148 VT-158	NJ-153
Early Childhood: CK	156	158	143-169	11	NH-161 RI-169	NJ-159
Ed. of Young Children (EC)	158	166	155-174	15	ME-166 RI-171	
El. ed.: Curriculum, etc.	163	159	151-168	17	None	
El. ed.: CK	148	148	135-156	9	ME-145 NJ-141 VT-148	NH-148 RI-145
English: CK	172	160	142-172	36	ME-160 NJ-162	NH-164 VT-172

	<i>CT</i>	<i>Nat'l Median</i>	<i>Nat'l Range</i>	<i>Number of States</i>	<i>Northeastern States (NY and MA do not use)</i>	
English: CE	160	155	145-160	8	NH-155	VT-160
Family & Consumer Sci.	630	560	500-630	27	ME-570	NJ-550
General Sci.: CK	157	152	143-160	20	NH-147 VT-157	NJ-152
General Sci.: CE	145	140	130-145	6	NH-145	VT-145
Health Ed.	680	620	420-690	21	ME-640	
Math: CK	137	136	116-156	36	NH-127 VT-141	NJ-137
Middle English	164	157	145-165	31	ME-155 NJ-156 VT-154	NH-155 RI-162
Middle Math	158	149	139-163	32	ME-148 NJ-152 VT-161	NH-151 RI-158
Middle Science	162	145	134-162	30	ME-142 RI-154	NJ-145 VT-157
Middle Soc. Studies	160	152	140-165	30	ME-153 NJ-158	NH-153 VT-165
Music: CK	153	151	139-162	31	NJ-153	VT-153
Music: Concepts and Processes	150	145	145-150	9	VT-150	
P.E.: CK	154	149.5	138-158	26	ME-149 VT-147	NJ-148
P.E.: Movement	154	149.5	141-154	8	VT-154	
Physics: CK	141	140	126-149	24	NH-146 VT-140	NJ-141
Physics: CE	135	137.5	135-150	4	NH-140	VT-150
Soc. Studies: CK	162	153.5	143-162	34	ME-157 NJ-157	NH-155 VT-162
Ed. of Exceptional Children: CK (Special ed.)	158	150	136-160	21	ME-157	
Tech. Ed.	640	580	540-640	26	ME-570	NJ-570

Notes:

The count of states includes only those states with a listed minimum score on the source of this information. This excludes 1-2 states per category that require the test but have not yet set a passing score.

“CE” indicates “Content Essay,” and “CK” means “Content Knowledge.” Content knowledge tests generally are multiple-choice.

Source of data: ETS, “The Praxis Series Passing Scores by Test and State.” Accessed March 1, 2008 at:

<http://www.etsliteracy.com/Media/Tests/PRAXIS/pdf/09706passingscores.pdf>

Table J-2. Connecticut's Minimum Praxis Test Scores Compared to the National Median Minimum Test Scores

<i>Lower</i>	<i>Same</i>	<i>Higher</i>
Praxis I: Reading Praxis I: Writing* Praxis I: Mathematics Art Making Art: Content, Traditions, etc.* Chemistry: CK Chemistry: CE* Early Childhood: CK Education of Young Children (EC) Physics: CE*	El. Ed.: CK	Art: CK Biology: CK Business Ed.* Earth Science CK El. Ed.: Curriculum, etc. English CK* English CE* Family and Consumer Sci.* General Science: CK General Science: CE* Health Ed. Math: CK Middle English Middle Math Middle Science* Middle Soc. Studies Music: CK Music: Concepts and Processes* P.E.: CK P.E.: Movement* Physics: CK Soc. Studies: CK* Ed. of Exceptional Children: CK (Special Ed.) Tech. Ed.*

*Indicates Connecticut's score was equal to the lowest or highest (whichever is appropriate to the column designation) minimum score nationwide. Note that the comparison does not convey at what absolute level of knowledge Connecticut requires of its teachers; the comparison shows only the level of knowledge Connecticut requires relative to other states.

Note: "CE" means "Content Essay," and "CK" indicates "Content Knowledge." Content knowledge tests are generally multiple-choice.

Source of data: ETS, "The Praxis Series Passing Scores by Test and State." Accessed March 1, 2008, at: <http://www.etsliteracy.com/Media/Tests/PRAXIS/pdf/09706passingscores.pdf>

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Appendix K

**Table K-1. Differences Between Poor and Non-poor Students in Public Schools
4th Grade Reading and Math: NAEP Assessment Scores by State, 2007**

READING			MATH		
Rank	State (includes Dist. of Columbia)	Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Not Eligible - Eligible Difference in Scaled Score	Rank	State (includes Dist. of Columbia)	Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Not Eligible - Eligible Difference in Scaled Score
1	North Dakota	16	1	Wyoming	12
2	Hawaii	18	2	North Dakota	15
3	Wyoming	18	3	West Virginia	15
4	Oklahoma	18	4	New Hampshire	15
5	Delaware	18	5	Oklahoma	16
6	Iowa	19	6	Delaware	16
7	Montana	19	7	Maine	16
8	West Virginia	19	8	Montana	16
9	Maine	19	9	Idaho	16
10	Idaho	19	10	Texas	17
11	Virginia	20	11	Utah	17
12	Utah	20	12	South Dakota	17
13	New Hampshire	21	13	Vermont	17
14	Florida	21	14	Hawaii	17
15	Missouri	21	15	Iowa	18
16	Kansas	22	16	Florida	18
17	South Dakota	22	17	Indiana	18
18	Kentucky	22	18	Kansas	18
19	Indiana	22	19	Louisiana	18
20	Ohio	22	20	Missouri	19
21	Vermont	23	21	Kentucky	19
22	Georgia	24	22	Mississippi	19
23	Texas	24	23	Oregon	20
24	Washington	24	24	New York	20
25	Nebraska	24	25	Tennessee	20
26	North Carolina	25	26	Virginia	20
27	Mississippi	25	27	Arkansas	20
28	New Mexico	25	28	District of Columbia	20
29	Louisiana	25	29	North Carolina	21
30	Nevada	25	30	Washington	21
31	Michigan	26	31	Nevada	21
32	Arkansas	26	32	Nebraska	21
33	Wisconsin	26	33	New Mexico	21
34	South Carolina	27	34	Minnesota	22
35	Tennessee	27	35	Massachusetts	22
36	Minnesota	27	36	Michigan	22
37	Maryland	27	37	Alaska	22
38	Rhode Island	27	38	New Jersey	22
39	New Jersey	27	39	Rhode Island	22
40	Oregon	28	40	Ohio	23
41	Illinois	28	41	South Carolina	23
42	Colorado	28	42	Georgia	23
43	District of Columbia	28	43	Maryland	24
44	New York	28	44	Wisconsin	25
45	Arizona	29	45	California	25
46	Massachusetts	29	46	Alabama	25
47	Alabama	29	47	Arizona	25
48	Alaska	30	48	Colorado	26
49	California	30	49	Illinois	26
50	Pennsylvania	30	50	Pennsylvania	26
51	Connecticut	38	51	Connecticut	29

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2007 Reading and Math Assessments.

**Table K-2. Gaps between Poor and Non-poor Students in Public Schools
8th Grade Reading and Math: NAEP Assessment Scores by State, 2007**

<u>READING</u>			<u>MATH</u>		
Rank	State (includes Dist. of Columbia)	Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Not Eligible - Eligible Difference in Scaled Score	Rank	State (includes Dist. of Columbia)	Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Not Eligible - Eligible Difference in Scaled Score
1	Maine	14	1	North Dakota	15
2	Idaho	14	2	Wyoming	16
3	North Dakota	14	3	District of Columbia	16
4	Hawaii	14	4	Maine	17
5	Wyoming	15	5	Idaho	18
6	New Hampshire	15	6	Hawaii	18
7	Utah	15	7	Vermont	19
8	South Dakota	15	8	South Dakota	19
9	Delaware	16	9	West Virginia	19
10	Oklahoma	16	10	Louisiana	20
11	Montana	17	11	Utah	20
12	West Virginia	17	12	Nevada	20
13	Vermont	17	13	Delaware	20
14	Florida	18	14	New Hampshire	20
15	District of Columbia	18	15	Oklahoma	20
16	Kentucky	19	16	Kentucky	21
17	Virginia	20	17	Iowa	22
18	Missouri	20	18	Tennessee	22
19	Nebraska	20	19	Indiana	22
20	Nevada	20	20	Arkansas	22
21	Louisiana	20	21	Texas	23
22	Minnesota	20	22	Florida	23
23	Maryland	20	23	Montana	23
24	Indiana	21	24	Kansas	23
25	Oregon	21	25	Mississippi	24
26	Iowa	21	26	Oregon	24
27	Washington	21	27	Arizona	24
28	Tennessee	21	28	New Mexico	24
29	Arkansas	22	29	New York	24
30	Kansas	22	30	Missouri	24
31	Pennsylvania	22	31	Ohio	25
32	New Mexico	22	32	Georgia	25
33	Colorado	22	33	South Carolina	25
34	Alabama	22	34	Maryland	25
35	Illinois	23	35	Minnesota	26
36	Georgia	23	36	Washington	26
37	Alaska	23	37	Michigan	26
38	Massachusetts	24	38	California	26
39	Mississippi	24	39	Pennsylvania	26
40	Texas	24	40	Alaska	26
41	Arizona	24	41	Virginia	27
42	Ohio	24	42	Wisconsin	28
43	Michigan	25	43	Nebraska	28
44	California	25	44	North Carolina	28
45	South Carolina	25	45	Rhode Island	28
46	North Carolina	25	46	Colorado	28
47	New York	25	47	Illinois	30
48	Rhode Island	25	48	Alabama	30
49	Wisconsin	26	49	New Jersey	31
50	New Jersey	26	50	Massachusetts	31
51	Connecticut	32	51	Connecticut	36

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2007 Reading and Math Assessments.

**Table K-3. Differences Between Black and White Students in Public Schools
4th Grade Reading and Math: NAEP Assessment Scores by State, 2007**

READING			MATH		
Rank	State (includes Dist. of Columbia)	Race/Ethnicity Black and White Students	Rank	State (includes Dist. of Columbia)	Race/Ethnicity Black and White Students
1	West Virginia	13	1	Hawaii	14
2	New Hampshire	14	2	West Virginia	14
3	Hawaii	15	3	Kentucky	19
4	Arizona	17	4	Delaware	20
5	Oklahoma	19	5	Alaska	20
6	New Mexico	20	6	Louisiana	21
7	Virginia	20	7	Iowa	21
8	Delaware	20	8	Oklahoma	22
9	Kentucky	21	9	Oregon	22
10	Alaska	22	10	Mississippi	22
11	Kansas	22	11	New Mexico	22
12	Nevada	22	12	Maine	22
13	Iowa	22	13	Texas	23
14	Washington	23	14	Virginia	23
15	Colorado	24	15	New Jersey	23
16	Indiana	24	16	Rhode Island	23
17	Florida	24	17	Nevada	23
18	Oregon	25	18	Georgia	24
19	Georgia	25	19	New Hampshire	24
20	Texas	25	20	South Dakota	24
21	New York	26	21	Ohio	25
22	Alabama	26	22	Florida	25
23	South Carolina	26	23	Indiana	25
24	Louisiana	26	24	Alabama	25
25	North Carolina	26	25	Massachusetts	25
26	New Jersey	26	26	Colorado	26
27	Missouri	26	27	New York	26
28	California	27	28	Washington	26
29	Mississippi	27	29	South Carolina	26
30	Ohio	27	30	Kansas	26
31	Maryland	28	31	Pennsylvania	26
32	Illinois	29	32	Tennessee	26
33	Rhode Island	29	33	Missouri	26
34	Michigan	30	34	North Carolina	27
35	Massachusetts	31	35	Arizona	28
36	Arkansas	31	36	Arkansas	28
37	Tennessee	32	37	Michigan	28
38	Minnesota	33	38	Maryland	29
39	Pennsylvania	33	39	California	29
40	Connecticut	34	40	Minnesota	31
41	Nebraska	36	41	Illinois	32
42	Wisconsin	38	42	Connecticut	32
43	District of Columbia	67	43	Nebraska	33
	Idaho	*	44	Wisconsin	38
	Maine	*	45	District of Columbia	54
	Montana	*		Idaho	*
	North Dakota	*		Montana	*
	South Dakota	*		North Dakota	*
	Utah	*		Utah	*
	Vermont	*		Vermont	*
	Wyoming	*		Wyoming	*

*Reporting standards not met. Sample size is insufficient to permit a reliable estimate

Source: U.S. Dept. of Ed., National Ctr. for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2007 Reading and Math Assessments.

**Table K-4. Differences Between Hispanic and White Students in Public Schools
4th Grade Reading and Math: NAEP Assessment Scores by State, 2007**

READING			MATH		
Rank	State (includes Dist. of Columbia)	Race/Ethnicity Black and White Students	Rank	State (includes Dist. of Columbia)	Race/Ethnicity Black and White Students
1	Louisiana	7	1	Montana	6
2	Montana	10	2	Louisiana	6
3	Missouri	14	3	Missouri	11
4	Florida	14	4	Florida	13
5	Delaware	15	5	Michigan	14
6	Tennessee	16	6	Oklahoma	15
7	Ohio	17	7	Iowa	15
8	Michigan	17	8	Arkansas	15
9	Virginia	17	9	Virginia	15
10	Georgia	18	10	Alaska	15
11	Wyoming	18	11	Indiana	16
12	Indiana	18	12	Delaware	16
13	Iowa	19	13	North Carolina	16
14	South Dakota	19	14	Kentucky	16
15	South Carolina	19	15	Georgia	17
16	New Hampshire	20	16	Texas	17
17	Kansas	20	17	Wyoming	17
18	Texas	21	18	New Hampshire	17
19	Wisconsin	21	19	South Dakota	18
20	Hawaii	22	20	Tennessee	18
21	Alaska	23	21	Maryland	18
22	Washington	23	22	Kansas	18
23	North Carolina	23	23	Ohio	18
24	Idaho	23	24	Pennsylvania	19
25	Maryland	23	25	Hawaii	20
26	New Mexico	23	26	Alabama	20
27	Arkansas	24	27	South Carolina	20
28	New Jersey	24	28	Idaho	21
29	Illinois	24	29	New York	21
30	Oklahoma	25	30	New Mexico	21
31	Utah	26	31	New Jersey	21
32	Arizona	27	32	Wisconsin	21
33	Nevada	27	33	Nevada	21
34	Nebraska	27	34	Rhode Island	22
35	New York	27	35	Washington	23
36	Rhode Island	29	36	Minnesota	23
37	Alabama	30	37	Nebraska	24
38	Colorado	30	38	Utah	24
39	Minnesota	31	39	Oregon	24
40	Massachusetts	32	40	Illinois	25
41	Oregon	32	41	Colorado	25
42	California	32	42	Massachusetts	26
43	Pennsylvania	33	43	Arizona	27
44	Connecticut	35	44	Connecticut	29
45	District of Columbia	52	45	California	29
	Kentucky	*	46	District of Columbia	42
	Maine	*		Maine	*
	Mississippi	*		Mississippi	*
	North Dakota	*		North Dakota	*
	Vermont	*		Vermont	*
	West Virginia	*		West Virginia	*

*Reporting standards not met. Sample size is insufficient to permit a reliable estimate

Source: U.S. Dept. of Ed., National Ctr. for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2007 Reading and Math Assessments.

**Table K-5. Differences Between Black and White Students in Public Schools
8th Grade Reading and Math: NAEP Assessment Scores by State, 2007**

<u>READING</u>			<u>MATH</u>		
Rank	State (includes Dist. of Columbia)	Race/Ethnicity Black and White Students	Rank	State (includes Dist. of Columbia)	Race/Ethnicity Black and White Students
1	Hawaii	7	1	Oregon	16
2	West Virginia	15	2	New Mexico	21
3	Nevada	15	3	West Virginia	21
4	New Mexico	17	4	Oklahoma	22
5	Kentucky	17	5	Arizona	23
6	Alaska	20	6	Alaska	23
7	Oregon	20	7	Colorado	24
8	Virginia	20	8	Kentucky	25
9	Arizona	21	9	Louisiana	25
10	Colorado	22	10	Nevada	26
11	Oklahoma	22	11	Washington	26
12	Iowa	22	12	Georgia	27
13	Washington	23	13	South Carolina	27
14	Louisiana	23	14	Mississippi	28
15	Delaware	23	15	Virginia	28
16	Florida	24	16	Arkansas	28
17	Pennsylvania	25	17	Tennessee	28
18	Massachusetts	25	18	Kansas	28
19	Georgia	25	19	Texas	29
20	Mississippi	25	20	Delaware	29
21	Alabama	26	21	North Carolina	29
22	Indiana	26	22	Florida	29
23	Texas	26	23	Iowa	31
24	South Carolina	26	24	Indiana	32
25	Kansas	27	25	New York	32
26	Maryland	27	26	Alabama	32
27	Tennessee	27	27	Ohio	33
28	Illinois	27	28	Missouri	34
29	Ohio	27	29	Rhode Island	34
30	Missouri	28	30	California	35
31	Minnesota	28	31	New Jersey	35
32	Nebraska	28	32	Maryland	36
33	Rhode Island	29	33	Pennsylvania	36
34	New York	29	34	Minnesota	37
35	California	29	35	Connecticut	38
36	New Jersey	29	36	Illinois	38
37	North Carolina	29	37	Massachusetts	40
38	Connecticut	30	38	Michigan	41
39	Arkansas	31	39	Wisconsin	45
40	Michigan	31	40	Nebraska	51
41	Wisconsin	38		District of Columbia	*
	District of Columbia	*		Hawaii	*
	Idaho	*		Idaho	*
	Maine	*		Maine	*
	Montana	*		Montana	*
	New Hampshire	*		New Hampshire	*
	North Dakota	*		North Dakota	*
	South Dakota	*		South Dakota	*
	Utah	*		Utah	*
	Vermont	*		Vermont	*
	Wyoming	*		Wyoming	*

*Reporting standards not met. Sample size is insufficient to permit a reliable estimate

Source: U.S. Dept. of Ed., National Ctr. for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2007 Reading and Math Assessments.

**Table K-6. Differences Between Hispanic and White Students in Public Schools
8th Grade Reading and Math: NAEP Assessment Scores by State, 2007**

<u>READING</u>			<u>MATH</u>		
Rank	State (includes Dist. of Columbia)	Race/Ethnicity Black and White Students	Rank	State (includes Dist. of Columbia)	Race/Ethnicity Black and White Students
1	Alabama	12	1	Hawaii	15
2	Florida	12	2	Ohio	15
3	Indiana	13	3	Wyoming	16
4	Alaska	13	4	Missouri	17
5	Hawaii	13	5	Tennessee	18
6	Ohio	14	6	Florida	18
7	Virginia	14	7	Alaska	20
8	Tennessee	15	8	South Carolina	21
9	Nebraska	16	9	Virginia	21
10	Delaware	17	10	Oklahoma	21
11	Arkansas	18	11	Georgia	22
12	Maryland	18	12	North Carolina	22
13	New Hampshire	18	13	Texas	23
14	Iowa	19	14	Indiana	23
15	New Mexico	20	15	South Dakota	23
16	Illinois	21	16	Idaho	24
17	Wyoming	21	17	Wisconsin	24
18	Georgia	21	18	New Hampshire	24
19	New Jersey	22	19	New Mexico	25
20	Wisconsin	22	20	Nevada	25
21	Missouri	22	21	Arkansas	25
22	Washington	23	22	Illinois	26
23	Texas	24	23	New York	26
24	Utah	24	24	Michigan	26
25	Kansas	24	25	Kansas	26
26	Nevada	24	26	Delaware	27
27	South Carolina	24	27	New Jersey	27
28	North Carolina	24	28	Arizona	27
29	Oklahoma	25	29	Washington	27
30	Idaho	25	30	Iowa	28
31	Colorado	25	31	Oregon	28
32	Oregon	26	32	Maryland	28
33	Michigan	26	33	Minnesota	28
34	California	26	34	Pennsylvania	29
35	Massachusetts	27	35	Alabama	29
36	Minnesota	28	36	Nebraska	29
37	Arizona	28	37	Utah	31
38	Pennsylvania	28	38	California	31
39	New York	29	39	Colorado	32
40	Connecticut	33	40	Rhode Island	33
41	Rhode Island	34	41	Massachusetts	35
	District of Columbia	*	42	Connecticut	39
	Kentucky	*		District of Columbia	*
	Louisiana	*		Kentucky	*
	Maine	*		Louisiana	*
	Mississippi	*		Maine	*
	Montana	*		Mississippi	*
	North Dakota	*		Montana	*
	South Dakota	*		North Dakota	*
	Vermont	*		Vermont	*
	West Virginia	*		West Virginia	*

*Reporting standards not met. Sample size is insufficient to permit a reliable estimate

Source: U.S. Dept. of Ed., National Ctr. for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2007 Reading and Math Assessments.

Appendix L

District Reference Groups (DRGs)

DRG A: Darien, Easton, New Canaan, Redding, Regional District 9, Ridgefield, Weston, Westport, Wilton
DRG B: Avon, Brookfield, Cheshire, Fairfield, Farmington, Glastonbury, Granby, Greenwich, Guilford, Madison, Monroe, New Fairfield, Newtown, Orange, Regional District 5, Regional District 15, Simsbury, South Windsor, Trumbull, West Hartford, Woodbridge
DRG C: Andover, Barkhamsted, Bethany, Bolton, Canton, Columbia, Cornwall, Ellington, Essex, Hebron, Mansfield, Marlborough, New Hartford, Oxford, Pomfret, Regional District 4, Regional District 7, Regional District 8, Regional District 10, Regional District 12, Regional District 13, Regional District 14, Regional District 17, Regional District 18, Regional District 19, Salem, Sherman, Somers, Suffield, Tolland
DRG D: Berlin, Bethel, Branford, Clinton, Colchester, Cromwell, East Granby, East Hampton, East Lyme, Ledyard, Milford, Newington, New Milford, North Haven, Old Saybrook, Rocky Hill, Shelton, Southington, Stonington, Wallingford, Waterford, Watertown, Wethersfield, Windsor
DRG E: Ashford, Bozrah, Brooklyn, Canaan, Chaplin, Chester, Colebrook, Coventry, Deep River, Eastford, East Haddam, Franklin, Hampton, Hartland, Kent, Lebanon, Lisbon, Litchfield, Norfolk, North Branford, North Stonington, Portland, Preston, Regional District 1, Regional District 6, Regional District 16, Salisbury, Scotland, Sharon, Thomaston, Union, Westbrook, Willington, Woodstock, Woodstock Academy
DRG F: Canterbury, East Windsor, Enfield, Griswold, Montville, North Canaan, Plainville, Plymouth, Regional District 11, Seymour, Sprague, Stafford, Sterling, Thompson, Voluntown, Windsor Locks, Wolcott
DRG G: Bloomfield, Bristol, East Haven, Gilbert Academy, Groton, Hamden, Killingly, Manchester, Middletown, Naugatuck, Norwich Free Academy, Plainfield, Putnam, Stratford, Torrington, Vernon, Winchester
DRG H: Ansonia, Danbury, Derby, East Hartford, Meriden, Norwalk, Norwich, Stamford, West Haven
DRG I: Bridgeport , Hartford, New Britain, New Haven, New London, Waterbury, Windham

Source: "Connecticut's District Reference Groups (DRGs), 2005-06 to Date," Connecticut State Department of Education, <http://www.csde.state.ct.us/public/cedar/edfacts/drgs.htm>

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Appendix M

Public Safety and Certification

The certification unit has a process to thoroughly review and evaluate the applications of educators who have applied for certification but have been convicted of a crime and/or dismissed for cause, the key statutory reasons for which a certification application may be denied. The department also has a staff person to investigate requests for educator revocation, made to the Commissioner of Education. Recent data on denial and revocation investigations and processes is presented below.

Table M-1. Reviews of Educator Applicants with Conviction or Misconduct Problem: July 2006 through August 2008	
<i>Outcome</i>	<i>Number of Applicants</i>
Reviewed and certification issued	266
Misconduct problem	75
Conviction	191
Reviewed and certification denied	7
Misconduct problem	5
Automatic conviction offense	1
Combination misconduct and conviction	1
Reviewed and decision pending	5
<i>Total reviewed</i>	<i>273</i>
Appeal to department review panel requested by applicant	5
Department review panel upheld	5
Of those who appealed, eligible for SDE review (decision currently pending)	1
Source of data: SDE	

Table M-2. Certification Revocations: School Years 2006-07 and 2007-08	
<i>Outcome</i>	<i>Number</i>
Revocation requests investigations completed	10
Request dismissed: lack of cause or detail	1
Investigation and report completed: Commissioner evaluated and determined course of action	9
Finding of probable cause for revocation	0
Finding of no probable cause	9
Automatic revocation for conviction of certain offenses	5
Requested review (received conditional reinstatement)	1
Voluntary certification surrender due to court order (part of negotiated plea)	1
Source of data: SDE	

Appendix N

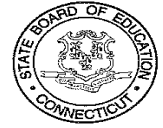
Table N-1. Convictions That Lead to Automatic Revocation of Educator Certificate, Permit, or Authorization	
<i>Crime</i>	<i>Statute Section Number</i>
All Class A felonies	---
Class B felonies, except first degree larceny (extortion, value exceeds \$10,000 or value exceeds \$2,000 when obtained by defrauding the public), first degree computer crime when value exceeds \$10,000, and vendor fraud when value exceeds \$10,000	---
<i>Child Care</i>	
Leaving child unsupervised in public place or motor vehicle	53-21
Substituting a child less than one year old when the original child is supposed to be returned to their parent or guardian	53a-99
<i>Civil or Personal Rights</i>	
Deprivation of a person's civil rights by wearing a mask or hood	53-37a
Burglary in the third degree with a firearm	53a-103a
Stalking in the first degree	53a-181c
<i>Assault</i>	
Assault of an elderly, blind, disabled, pregnant, or mentally retarded person in the second degree, with or without firearm	53a-60b and -60c
Sexual assault in the second, third (with or without firearm), or fourth degrees	53a-71, 53-72a, 53-72b, 53-73a
<i>Sex</i>	
Promotion of prostitution in the third degree	53a-88
Incest by parent or guardian	53a-191
Obscenity as to minors	53a-196
Importing child pornography	53a-196c
<i>Weapons</i>	
Criminal use of a firearm or electronic defense system	53a-216
Possession of a weapon on school grounds	53a-217b
<i>Drugs</i>	
Manufacture, distribution, sale, or intent to sell hallucinogenic substances other than marijuana or certain narcotics substances	21a-277
Manufacture, distribution, sale, or intent to sell heroin, methamphetamine, cocaine in free-base form, lysergic acid diethylamide, or large amount of cannabis-type substance, and who is not drug-dependent	21a-278

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Appendix O



STATE OF CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION



February 9, 2009

Ms. Carrie E. Vibert, Director
Legislative Program Review and Investigations Committee
Connecticut General Assembly
State Capitol, Room 506
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Ms. Vibert:

I am writing in response to your letter regarding the Program Review and Investigations Committee's final report on *Teacher Certification Program Implementation*. Please see the attached response to the recommendations contained in the report that was adopted by the committee at its meeting on December 11, 2008.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the Department of Education's response, please feel free to contact Nancy Pugliese, Bureau Chief, Educator Standards and Certification, at 713-6708.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. McQuillan".

Mark K. McQuillan
Commissioner of Education

MKM:nph

cc: Marion H. Martinez, Associate Commissioner
Karen M. Flanagan, Division Director
Nancy L. Pugliese, Bureau Chief

Attachments

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Response to Program Review and Investigations Committee's Report
Submitted February 6, 2009

Manager Responsibilities for Monitoring Staff Effectiveness (PRI recommendations 1, 2, 3, 4, 7 and 8):

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) has recently developed an online, web-based certification application system that is accessible to the Bureau of Educator Standards and Certification (BESC) now and is scheduled to be accessible to the public on March 2, 2009. The newly designed Connecticut Educator Certification System (CECS) will provide the unit manager with the capability of accessing each employee's inbox populated with work that is not yet completed. Therefore, the unit manager will be able to visually see which consultants have a backlog of applications that are waiting to be reviewed and analyzed. This information will be easily accessible and will provide an easy, effective monitoring tool to be used. Additionally, the new system will have a number of reports that can be run regularly to provide the unit manager with pertinent, up-to-date information regarding the number of specific applications completed within a set time period. Also, the unit will develop some quarterly and yearly performance objectives and measures by which to judge the work of the unit. These performance measures will be used to monitor the unit's performance.

The CECS will also allow the unit manager to access all applicants' certification files electronically; therefore, all pertinent data needed to be reviewed to determine an individual's eligibility for certification will be included in each individual's electronic file. Such access will allow the unit manager to audit a small number of recently completed files to check for accuracy and consistency of decisions by certification analysts.

Once the new system has been functional for a period of one year, the CSDE intends to electronically survey recent applicants who have used the CECS to determine their satisfaction with the new online system. Additionally, the unit will include questions about the applicant's satisfaction regarding the customer service received and the timeliness of the unit's responses within the application process.

With the implementation of the new CECS, the CSDE plans to redesign the audit process for ensuring that the planned programs offered by approved Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) include the required coursework to meet the certification requirements. Within the new CECS, original transcripts will be scanned and retained in the applicant's electronic files and, therefore, IHEs have been asked to submit the transcripts of all graduates. The CSDE will then be able to audit a smaller percentage of transcripts over the five or seven-year accreditation cycle on an ongoing basis. This will relieve the IHEs of the 100 percent audit of all applicant files in the year preceding their accreditation visit.

In November 2008, a statutory proposal was submitted to the legislature that would require any board of education or private special education facility approved by the Commissioner of Education to report to the Commissioner of Education when an employee who holds a certificate, permit or authorization is dismissed for cause.

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Response to Program Review and Investigations Committee's Report
Submitted February 6, 2009

Professional Development (PRI recommendations 5 and 6):

The new CECS originally included a module designed to audit and track professional development completed for Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for each educator. Unfortunately, the professional development module has not been completed at this time due to resource constraints (e.g., staffing, funding and time). However, the new system does track the individuals that are audited to ensure completion of appropriate professional development and CEUs, and records this information as part of their certification history.

Recently, the CSDE entered into a contract with ProTraxx, an independent vendor used by approximately 90 public school districts in Connecticut, who has developed a web-based tracking system for professional development and recording CEU completion. This contract will allow CSDE staff to enter the system and electronically review the professional development activities being offered by districts and audit professional certificate holders from those participating districts for completion of appropriate CEUs.

Section 10-145b(1)(ℓ) of the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) addresses the responsibilities of each local board of education for professional development activities to be offered by the district with the advice and assistance of the teachers employed in the individual districts. Previously, information concerning professional development offered for CEUs has been provided to districts through circular letters addressed to the superintendent of schools, the *CertAlert* newsletter, e-mails and telephone calls. The CSDE will again correspond with school districts to remind them that C.G.S. Section 10-220a(b) requires the development of a comprehensive professional development plan with the advice and assistance of the teachers and administrators employed in that district, including representatives of the teacher and administrator unions.

Educator Certification Compliance (PRI recommendations 9, 11, 12 and 13)

The annual compliance process is based on self-reported information provided to the CSDE by the districts. This information is compared with the information in the BESC database to produce the compliance report which is electronically distributed to all districts. Districts are required to review and resubmit reports with corrections and edits. The process for larger districts can be long and involved. The staff responsible for completing the report varies from district to district, but often the individual is a human resources support staff member with little or no certification knowledge. This directly impacts the timeframe in which the report is completed. The responsible BESC individual must contact and collect additional information from district administration and staff which can at times be difficult. As a result, the BESC has been flexible with regard to the timeframe to complete the process. The accuracy of the report is of primary importance. More than 240 reports are submitted annually to the CSDE. Ideally, we would prefer that all reports be returned by early February; however, we recognize this timeline is not always practical or possible. We choose to work collaboratively with the districts, sending reminder letters twice. Under this system, the number of non-reporting districts has dropped each year. This past year, more than 85 percent of the reports were returned by the end of February,

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Response to Program Review and Investigations Committee's Report
Submitted February 6, 2009

with only a handful of districts requiring the third notification which is sent to the chairperson of the local or regional board of education. Notification to a board chairperson earlier in the process would only serve to alienate the districts at a time when we are striving to keep channels of communication open. This past year, under the current process, all compliance reports were received.

As with any self-reported data, our process is only as accurate as the information reported to us. However, in addition to the annual compliance report, there are several other initiatives within the CSDE that support the bureau's compliance process:

- annual district NCLB reports;
- annual NCLB progress reports;
- highly qualified teacher monitoring reports;
- site visits under the Bureau of Accountability and Compliance Monitoring and the Bureau of School Improvement; and
- Charter School approval visits which occur every five years.

Future improvements to confirm the reliability of the district-reported staff data include the collection of district payroll information and teacher schedules. Collection of this information will provide an additional level of information to ensure the accuracy of the information entered by the districts into the staff file.

Recognizing the need to check the accuracy of district-reported data, this past year the BESC, in conjunction with the Bureau of Accountability and Compliance Monitoring, met with the human resources staff in three priority districts who have exhibited significant, ongoing compliance issues. While these visits were informal and primarily informational and supportive, both bureaus will be discussing the next steps to integrate compliance into the larger monitoring initiative within the CSDE. Additionally, the CSDE will be monitoring a select number of districts for the "highly qualified teacher" (HQT) requirement in the No Child Left Behind federal law. Certification compliance must first be achieved in order for a teacher to be considered HQT.

The bureau's new CECS was to include a module that would provide direct district access to the certification system, allowing the districts to obtain current information on the certification status of employees at any time. However, this module has not been developed due to insufficient resources (staffing, funding and time). Therefore, districts will not have access to the CECS.

The BESC continues to collaborate with the Teachers' Retirement Board (TRB) to address compliance issues which directly impact the awarding of retirement credit. BESC continues to notify the TRB of those teachers employed in districts who hold no certificate for their position. Additionally, as has been the case for quite some time, the BESC continues to provide the TRB notification of any employed teacher who has a lapse in certification. Notification of the teachers working out-of-field at the time of discovery is not provided to TRB at this time. Past experience has shown that out-of-field placements are often corrected through district action,

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Response to Program Review and Investigations Committee's Report
Submitted February 6, 2009

including reassignment, amendment of job responsibilities or clarification of an assignment. Others may be corrected through issuance of a certificate, permit or authorization which may have been pending at the time the report was run. As a result, we do not routinely report these individuals at the time of discovery. The BESC will consider providing this information to the TRB at the conclusion of the compliance monitoring process.

State Board Action (PRI recommendation 10):

Upon completion of the annual certification compliance review, a report will be submitted to the State Board of Education. The State Board will determine what action, if any, is necessary for districts having non-certified or out-of-field teachers teaching within the district.

Reciprocity of Coursework Requirements (PRI recommendation 15):

Connecticut is one of 38 states currently participating in the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC) Interstate Agreement to certify candidates based upon the completion of either:

- (1) a state approved teacher preparation program from a regionally accredited institution; or
- (2) a minimum of 27 months of successful, full-time experience within seven years of application under a member state's valid level II educator certificate appropriate to the subject area being requested.

States Participating in the NASDTEC Interstate Agreement:

Alabama	Illinois	New Hampshire	South Carolina
Arkansas	Indiana	New Jersey	Tennessee
California	Kentucky	New Mexico	Texas
Colorado	Maine	New York	Utah
Delaware	Maryland	North Carolina	Vermont
Dist. of Columbia	Massachusetts	Ohio	Virginia
Florida	Michigan	Oklahoma	Washington
Georgia	Mississippi	Oregon	West Virginia
Hawaii	Montana	Pennsylvania	
Idaho	Nevada	Rhode Island	

Each year, Connecticut certifies about 3,000 (63 percent of the 4,600 total number certified) newly prepared in-state educators and 1,600 (36 percent of the 4,600 total number certified) out-of-state prepared educators based on completion of an approved program or teaching experience in other states. The top three states from which we receive and certify the most educators include New York, Massachusetts and Rhode Island, representing 23 percent of newly certified educators; the remaining 13 percent of newly certified educators come from other states. Only 1

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Response to Program Review and Investigations Committee's Report
Submitted February 6, 2009

percent of our newly certified educators apply from states not participating in the NASDTEC Interstate Agreement (i.e., Alaska, Arizona, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin and Wyoming).

Over the last 20 years, Connecticut's participation in the NASDTEC Interstate Agreement has served us well as the most comprehensive vehicle for ensuring interstate standards for certification reciprocity of candidates who have completed educator preparation programs or have successful education experience. NASDTEC does not encompass waiving individual state degree or testing requirements.

The CSDE will consider the viability of using completion of a preparation program accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) as an added measure of reciprocity; however, NCATE accreditation is not universally sought across the country as only 632 colleges or programs of education hold NCATE accreditation.

Concerning Alternate Route to Certification (ARC) Programs, CSDE does certify individuals who complete an ARC program provided that it has been accredited and approved by the state in which it functions, issues a transcript bearing credits for the training completed and completes a recommendation for certification. Furthermore, CSDE is currently working with NASDTEC to establish criteria to ensure consistency of standards by which all participating states can certify ARC applicants who apply to Connecticut with less than three years of experience under a valid certificate from the participating state.

Certification regulations and proposed requirements (PRI recommendations 16, 17, 18 and 19):

A major underlying goal of the proposed revisions to the certification regulations is to provide flexibility while ensuring high standards for candidates seeking certification and for school districts hiring newly certified candidates.

Proposed regulations for secondary 6-12 content area endorsements will provide an option for ***closely related majors***. This proposal will apply to shortage and non-shortage area endorsements. Furthermore, in lieu of a subject area major, we provide an option for the candidate to complete a minimum of 30 credits in the subject area. This option provides candidates who do not have a subject area major in a secondary certificate area, but who have 30 credits of coursework in a secondary content area, to qualify for certification based on credits rather than a full major. Furthermore, we are working with curriculum experts to develop a broad list of acceptable coursework directly within and related to the academic area in which certification is sought. This will provide all candidates, IHEs and ARC programs maximum flexibility for meeting content area requirements, without decreasing our standards for secondary content preparation.

To ensure the continued pipeline of candidates into elementary education, proposed regulations for elementary education K-6 will continue to provide an option for any subject area major or an

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Response to Program Review and Investigations Committee's Report
Submitted February 6, 2009

interdisciplinary major with required coursework in certain academic subjects. Preparation and certification data indicate that a significant number of our elementary education candidates are prepared at the graduate level having already completed a bachelor's degree in degree areas that are not in core academic areas such as English, mathematics or science.

Proposed regulations for advancing to the professional educator certificate level for holders of a provisional educator certificate will require completion of 30 graduate credits beyond the bachelor's degree, with these credits leading toward a planned program in an advanced certification area, or a master's degree in their content area or another content area for which they will receive a cross-endorsement. The CSDE maintains that having advanced training, particularly in a specialized area of content expertise or leadership, is critical to creating the human resource and educational supports within a school and district that contribute to overall student achievement and school/district improvement. Higher education programs offering advanced certification programs are focusing these programs on training candidates to use and analyze student learning data as part of a professional learning community and to engage in and contribute to school and district improvement.

Stakeholder Representation on Committees (PRI recommendations 14, 20 and 24)

Stakeholders from all levels of the education community are involved in every initiative under development or review by the CSDE. The CSDE seeks recommendations from regional educational service center staff, higher education faculty, school district superintendents and principals, state-level professional organizations and consultants within the CSDE who may work with educators across the state.

On any given committee, the CSDE strives to ensure a broad and balanced representation of committee membership as appropriate to the issue under discussion or review. The CSDE takes into consideration several criteria in the formation of stakeholder committees including:

- years of education experience;
- professional expertise in areas relevant to the initiative;
- areas of certification preparation/training;
- gender;
- race;
- Demographic Representation Group (DRG) of the district where employed; and
- role representation (parent, teacher, administrator, student, etc.).

In the future, we will strive to broaden our strategies for recruiting representation for committees.

Acceptable Types of Professional Development and Integration with Teacher Evaluation Process (PRI recommendations 21, 22 and 23):

Current Connecticut statutes require the completion of nine CEUs for every five-year period that an educator is employed in a Connecticut public school and serving under a professional

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Response to Program Review and Investigations Committee's Report
Submitted February 6, 2009

educator certificate. The State Board of Education has proposed to the General Assembly a statutory revision that would remove the restrictive statutory CEU requirements from the statute and provide the State Board of Education with the power to develop the list of priorities and focus for the completion of CEUs. Because more than 50 percent of teachers now enter the profession holding a master's degree, completion of CEUs will also be expanded to include provisional and professional certificate holders; educators who enter the profession at the bachelor's degree level may complete two graduate courses in lieu of the required nine CEUs. Part of this request will also include broadening the types of professional development activities which will include, but not be limited to:

1. formal mentoring of one or more beginning teachers, and other related roles within the teacher induction program;
2. participating in or leading district or school-level committees, initiatives or seminars on any of the following topics:
 - a. developing and/or teaching a new curriculum;
 - b. assessing students (including development of assessments) and using assessment data to adjust instruction;
 - c. differentiating instruction for diverse learners; and
 - d. participating in a New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) school evaluation as a visiting team member, or preparing for a NEASC accreditation visit in district; and
3. completing coursework to obtain a cross endorsement;
4. completing a research project that is focused on improving student learning;
5. serving as a leader or teacher-in-residence at the CSDE; and
6. working on obtaining certification by the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards.

If this statutory revision is enacted into law, the CEU Procedures Manual and CEU Guidelines will be updated to include this detailed list of activities that are acceptable professional development activities to be completed for CEUs.

The CSDE is currently forming a committee to review and update teacher evaluation standards and guidelines. These revised standards and guidelines will link individual teachers' growth plans to the student learning and district goals. Professional development for individual teachers will be integrally connected to student learning and district goals.

The CSDE convened a Steering Committee on January 23, 2006, to review and make recommendations on the direction of the Connecticut Educator Continuum for the next 20 years, including the development of high-quality professional development that aligns with the National Staff Development Council's (NSDC) Standards for Professional Development. Stakeholders were invited to participate in the Committee and included active and retired teachers, principals, superintendents, human resource directors, as well as representatives from Connecticut Education Association (CEA) and the CSDE.

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Response to Program Review and Investigations Committee's Report
Submitted February 6, 2009

Because the Educator Continuum had not been reviewed since the 1980s, the Steering Committee proposed 10 recommendations; thus far, the State Board of Education has considered two of the 10 recommendations.

CSDE will continue to use the advisory committee process to develop a more comprehensive framework for overseeing and approving high quality professional development offered by districts and outside business providers. It is through the development of the Guidelines for Effective Professional Development that this framework will be communicated to districts and other professional development providers.

Convening Panels of Educators to Re-evaluate Assessments (PRI recommendation 25)

Every five years, the CSDE conducts a comprehensive impact analysis of the pass/fail rates for the Praxis I and Praxis II examinations administered by Educational Testing Service. Content area tests which have a pass rate below 70 percent are reviewed to determine the reasons for the low pass rates and to determine how those pass rates can be raised. Representative panels are convened to conduct a comprehensive review and analysis of:

- examinations administered and their impact;
- the most up-to-date national standards;
- the State's professional standards for teachers in the discipline; and
- the State curriculum standards, in order to determine whether the current minimum passing score is still valid and appropriate.

The panel recommends and provides evidence to the CSDE regarding whether or not passing test standards should be modified. Newly recommended passing test scores are presented to the State Board of Education for its approval.

Revised curriculum standards are currently available in most teaching disciplines, new proposed teacher certification regulations are proposed for 2014, and revisions to professional teaching standards are underway in 2009 for as many as 18 disciplines. Therefore, prior to 2014, the CSDE plans to allocate funds to re-examine each required test and its corresponding passing test standard regardless of their pass/fail rates in order to ensure their validity and alignment with State guidelines, standards and mandates.

Developing Teacher Testing Reciprocity (PRI recommendation 26):

The CSDE continues its efforts to develop testing reciprocity with Massachusetts, New York and other northeast states. In Fall 2008, CSDE representatives from Connecticut and Massachusetts met to begin discussions focused on identifying valid and legally defensible strategies for equating Massachusetts' Tests for Educator Licensure (MTL) examinations developed by a different testing company, Pearson Evaluation Systems, and Connecticut's Praxis I and II tests developed by Educational Testing Service (ETS), for admission to an IHE and for teacher certification.

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